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# AN ANCHOR OF THE SOUL:

A STUDY OF THE NATURE OF FAITH.

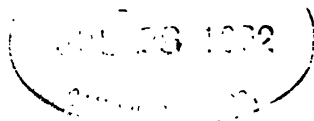
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BY JAMES VILA BLAKE.

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CHICAGO:  
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The Author

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TO  
JOSEPH HENRY ALLEN, D. D.

---

*Revered Teacher and dear Friend:*

He is honored enough who honors a wise man. Therefore in taking privilege to inscribe this little work to you, the wise and generous Scholar, I have more honor than I could harvest from a world's applause. I desired greatly your judgment and aid in the manuscript, but could not prevail with myself that you should discover before this inscription my little worthiness of your approval in this offering. The hollow of that deficiency I entreat you to fill up from the abundance of my affectionate and grateful reverence.

JAMES VILA BLAKE.

*February, 1894, Chicago.*



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# BOOK FIRST.

## CHAPTER I.

**That there have been Many Different Views and Definitions of Faith.**

WORDS are but sign-posts, showing the paths in the soul; you can not go to the end of any path. Or again: Words are like doors, swinging wide, serving to make us free of vast courts, corridors, archways, aisles, holy crypts; but when we look in or would go in, the endless halls run into darkness. Human speech thus witnesses to the delicate facts and unpathed regions of the human soul. For these lie before us; they are never absent; facts of the soul arise constantly as matters of experience. Yet they elude definition; language cannot contain them; words make few paths to them and none through them.

Such a fact is Faith. What is this thing called Faith? Let us put forth into this cloister-hall or this vanishing path of the soul and go as far as we can.

The name Faith has been given to many facts or acts of the soul; and often to contrary facts, so that if one has been called faith properly, the



others can not be. This name has divided sects and schools from each other, and the people from the philosophers. And among the people, yes, and among the learned too, the wise and unwise alike, very great moral contrasts have been covered by this same name. For what has gone by this name often has been the breath of glorious actions, and often again the veil of lies and cruelties—as on the one hand martyrdom, patience, mercy, forgiveness, trust, courage, knowledge, freedom, blithe heart, and on the other hand “pious frauds,” ignorance, mourning, sack cloth and ashes, pride, war, persecution, tortures. The bad and the good, the fierce and the gentle, the free and the slavish, say alike that their deeds come of Faith.

But this division, diversity, unlikeness, has its use; indeed, no little value. For it is a witness to how great and deep a fact of soul Faith is. If only one party of men lay claim to it, then Faith might be an empty error, a vanity, a conceit of a little company. Nay, if all men were agreed what Faith was, then Faith were no very great thing. For what grand thing is there in the world, on the nature of which men are agreed? It is some small thing, and mostly such as can be handled, and, next, what may be seen, and less still, what may be heard (for hearing is the most spiritual sense that purveys knowledge), on which men are agreed. Therefore, since all parties differ and often are very wide apart as to what Faith may be, and yet

all claim it and revere it, and say it is a mighty thing in the soul, it must be so—it must be a great deep within us which thus bears every one up and no one can sound it. The word or name, Faith, is needful and has come forth by reason of sublime moral facts in human nature. We shall not do unwisely if we set out with this thought, as on a path, and try whither it will lead.

Moreover, as the word Faith has been used to name so many unlike things, we may suspect a unity or likeness lurking somewhere at which men have aimed by this name. For it is a strange thing, and the like not to be found in language, if men have fixed one name on so many things altogether different, even contrary and opposed. Wherefore let us look narrowly whether there be not an inward state of a believer, a manner of believing, and this state or manner, being alike in all, has caused men to give one name, Faith, each to his own belief, because men felt in a like way and believed with a like spirit, but saw only the unlike beliefs. This is no more than to say that early and easily men have known the lighter and floating things in which they differ, but only long afterward, and not even yet, the deep things in which they are at one.

We have then these two thoughts to set out with, that Faith is a very great reality of some kind, and that the manner of believing or state of the believer may be more material to Faith than the belief.

But what are some of the unlike things which men have called faith?

I intend only the religious sense of it; for the word has other uses in human affairs. I speak of the meaning of Faith among the terms of religion. These meanings in chief I count four:

Faith has signified a very strong conviction, very fervent and held very sacred, come to by the mind in its free exercise of reason. This is the noblest meaning of the four.

Secondly, Faith has signified a strong conviction, very fervent and held very sacred, but not come to by the mind, but rather loaded upon the mind by impression and sentiment, or by opinion and voice, without oversight of reason, making light of reason, or even scorning and scouting it. This is the lowest and poorest meaning, and discloses weakness of the spirit.

For the third, Faith has signified thorough cession of oneself and entire subjection to a church or priesthood or to writings, held to be of divine authority. This is a tyrannic sense. Like all tyrannies, it may work in two ways: If men be low, it will raise them by order and obedience, for order is a great power and obedience a great virtue. But if once men grow high in all things but the tyranny and hence need it no more, and still it hold its grip, then it drags them down, being like armor, stifling weights and fetters when no longer it is defence.

For the fourth meaning, Faith has denoted an

acceptance of saving doctrine wrought in the soul by an act of divine grace. To me this meaning is an impiety. I mean not that they are impious who hold it; for it is wonderful what profane things men may do, say and think, while yet there is no impiety in their hearts. But if goodness be something real and is unlike sinfulness, and if truth be something real and differs from error, then to bestow salvation for no virtue of the soul, nay, nor even for any thinking of the soul's own, but for a credence done in it by grace, is but an unholy wilfulness; and that is an unrighteous, a barbarous, thought of God.

Around these four main views of Faith, as they have prevailed in times or in places, one or another of them, or as they have striven with each other, have been grouped many things in history, literature, government, and art.

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## CHAPTER II.

### **That there are Objections to these Views, and Especially One Objection Underlying Them All.**

THAT all these four views of Faith, except the first one, are open to objections I have said already; as that the second is but a weakness of spirit, doffing reason, like a helmet too heavy for the head—surely no such strong thing this as Faith must be; that the third is as weak as the second, and harsher, because both are subjections,

but in the latter the master is foreign—I mean outside the mind, and often has been cruel; and that the fourth has no look of reality or nature or harmony in it, but of pretence or invention—unrighteous, wilful, ill-sorted, mis-joined. Now these general objections run into many divisions, and bring to light many instances and points; but it is needless to follow them, for there is one objection which is enough of itself, and applies to all the four views, the first no less than the others.

This objection is, that by all these views Faith is not distinguished from belief—I mean belief in some fixed doctrines; and even some who have tried to define Faith better than this, say no more than that it lies in the *manner* of believing these same things, and is a certain great energy and ardor of belief of them. But now I will dare to say that Faith must not be confused with belief in any sum of doctrines or with any manner of believing the same; because Faith is something much greater than any doctrines however venerable or religious, and greater than any manner of holding doctrines however devoted be this manner. This point, the greatness of the true nature of Faith, is my aim or goal, to which I hope we shall come in good time. But here I will offer five special reasons why it is well or needful to part Faith carefully from belief in any doctrines, or from any manner of believing them.

The first reason is that by a strange argument, hanging on this view of Faith, persons commend

themselves for taking doctrines carelessly, without thought. For, say they, we are to be saved by Faith; therefore the more Faith, the better and safer. But Faith is belief in the true creed. Therefore we will believe all that is offered us, or as much as possible, and question not; because if we err in believing more than enough, this is no hurtful error, for at least we believe enough, and are safe. The morality of this argument is so bad, and so servile and fawning it is, that I should not state it here as a mode of thinking, or deem it could prevail in any one, if more than one person had not set it forth to me as potent in their minds and as good wisdom in religion. But the evil is not in the logic but in this wrong view of Faith. I know no way to fly from the logic if once the bad premises be granted, that Faith is belief in any sum of doctrines, or a manner of believing them.

Another reason against this same view of Faith, is that it nurses a very vile pride, a pride of Faith, a vaunting of oneself in religion. Then doth a man put on a badge and face it out boldly that thereby he has put on the virtues of which the badge is token. But, as says Amiel in his Journal, "generally speaking it is the contrary which happens. The nobler the badge, the less estimable is the wearer of it. Such at least is the presumption." By which I think Amiel means that a noble badge is like to draw a crowd of the unworthy to dress themselves with it; or perhaps he means that one who takes any glorious thing

to make a mark or badge for himself whereby to set himself above others, so misuses greatness as to show himself little. "It is extremely dangerous," Amiel continues, "to pride oneself on any moral or religious specialty whatever. Tell me what you pique yourself upon and I will tell you what you are not." Now this view of Faith, that it is belief in a sum of doctrines, has nourished this bad pride, the content and comfort of multitudes who will not take one step in any path to knowledge and thought. "Lo! we are above the great and look down on the learned," they cry; "for behold us well assured in matters which impiously they cast away, or weakly wrestle with by their dull sense and unlighted reason." So Barrow says—"By virtue of Faith, rustic and mechanic idiots do in true knowledge surpass the most refined wits, \* \* \* tell us that which a learned infidel doth not know;" and on he goes with a long triumph on the illumination of a Christian child, properly indoctrinated, compared with the darkness of Socrates, Plato, Cicero, Seneca, Epicurus. But what "rustic and mechanic" boasting is this! And all for no shape of his own, but for garments overlaid on him! Here is no humility, no simpleness, no, nor true knowledge, no, nor yet fineness nor chastity of soul, but only loud flourishing, pride, flapping and crowing, like a cock who equally well will crow on any place of advantage, whether it be a barn-heap or a hill of sweet-flowering turf. 'Tis a bad count against any

view of Faith that ever it nurses such a pride. True, the pride may be in the man, with no root in the thought. Yet if the like pride appear in many men, the thoughts common to them are to be examined narrowly.

The third reason why this view of Faith, that it is the same with believing some doctrines or with a manner of believing them, is an ill view, is that thereupon Faith makes no room for doubt with it or near it, but must have the whole chamber of the mind to itself and casts out doubt as an unwelcome intruder. "Doubt shall have no part with me," quoth Faith; "I will make no junto with such a fellow; he is a shabby Alien, with none of my blood in him, nor the blood of my race." Thus by Faith, at this turn or view of it wherein it is confused with belief, doubt always has been disowned and thrust out; and rightly too, if Faith be merely belief of a creed or a manner of believing it. For then doubt is the direct opposite of Faith, and a false claimant, a thievish "sturdy beggar" at the door. Therefore it has been hated and hunted, as a disturber and enemy, an artful pretender, a destroyer of peace, a foe of the truth. Yea, so great is the confidence of this family of Faith that it has not scrupled to pass divine judgment, outlawing doubt as "an enemy of God." To choke a doubt has been glorified as a high victory of Faith, and to be past having a doubt, or not to have come to one, howsoever it might be, has been called the very crown and mark of the



high calling of Faith. No way to deal with doubt but by flight into Faith's chamber and hiding one's head under the creed! Sir Thomas Browne writes of himself, "There are, as in philosophy, so in divinity, sturdy doubts and boisterous objections wherewith the unhappiness of our knowledge too nearly acquainteth us. More of these no man hath known than myself; which I confess I conquered not in a martial posture, but on my knees." Then tells he how the devil whispered to him that the brazen serpent might have healed through some secret sympathy, that perhaps it was naphtha, not water, which Elijah poured over his altar, that the combustion of Sodom might be due to a bituminous lake, and the manna of Moses the same as the honey-dew in Arabia described by travelers. "The devil therefore," says he, "made the query, 'Where was then the miracle in the days of Moses?' The Israelites saw but that in his time, which the natives of those countries behold in ours. Thus the devil played at chess with me, and, yielding a pawn, thought to gain a queen of me, taking advantage of my honest endeavors; and, whilst I labored to raise the structure of my reason, he strove to undermine the edifice of my faith."\* But truly I must say, not profanely, that it is but a demoniacal kind of Faith which so dances to find a devil in doubt; for always you shall find that it is the devil who is quick to think he noses an imp, being steamed in his own smell and

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\* Religio Medici, Sec. XIX.

carrying always his abode in his nostrils. Doubt is not a foe, an alien, a thief, nor aught infernal or evil, no, but divine, most friendly to man and whispering angelically to the soul, albeit first the voice be like a discipline. It is the quickening of a new child of Thought. It is the sudden sight of the mind, or—nobler still—that long, dutiful, patient suspense, which is the very power and patience of God in us. It is the rapturous burst, or the exciting surmise, of things much greater than yet we know. There is no way to doubt never but to think never, to dream never; yea, even never to worship, for adoration will lift the soul sometime to a height where things will look little that once looked large. Wherefore, by the confusion of Faith with belief, doubt has been like a Christ coming down into the human soul, by virtue of its reasonable essence, to reveal new and great glories from heaven, and forever cast out and crucified.\*

The fourth reason against viewing Faith as a belief in a creed or as intensity of such belief, is that moral and spiritual distinctions are confounded thereby; yes, and distinctions of the very greatest import to the religious life, so that not only unlike things are confounded, shuffled together and confused, but the bad is confounded with the

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\* "Europe was beginning (in the twelfth century) to enter into that inexpressibly painful period in which men have learned to doubt, but have not yet learned to regard doubt as innocent; in which the new mental activity produces a variety of opinions, while the old credulity persuades them that all but one class of opinions are the suggestions of the devil."—*Lecky's "Rationalism in Europe,"* Vol. I., p. 72.

good, so that either the bad is praised or the good is scouted according to the temper or creed of the beholder. If it be Faith to give ourselves up and surrender us like a prey or a captive to some particular belief or creed, and doubt by consequence either is impossible by reason of our slavishness or called impiety by our ignorance, why then madness and sound mind are one, frenzy and calmness are the same, both being Faith, fearing and trusting, thinking and non-thinking, cruelty and mercy are alike, the inquisitor and the martyr are the same persons, the torturer and the victim have one countenance, fanatical fury and saintly forbearance agree, Jesus is overleaped by Peter the Hermit and Pope John has a better title than Huss,—all are confused, one not to be known from another in morals and religion, if Faith be but belief or intensity thereof. But is it to be said that it is one thing, one heavenly fact, named Faith, which upholds the martyr in the fire and brought him to the flames smiling, yet likewise fires up fanatics till the fagots catch flames from them? No. This confounds all moral and spiritual qualities. Rather I say the difference is as wide as the heavens. 'Tis not charity, but ignorance of Faith and abuse of the high name of it, if we call the creed-zeal and passion of the inquisitor Faith.

Finally, for the fifth reason against this view of Faith, it is this, that history tears it from us if once we will let that stern Muse lay hands on

our minds. It is possible to forbear her, easy in truth to escape her; for what easier than ignorance? Therefore many persons still do cling to Faith as a belief in a particular creed—a very rudeness of mind—by the same way as they escape gentle attiring, because they have not grace to obtain good company. But if once you shall make terms of friendship with History, the unconforming Muse will strip you clean of many rank, fusty garments to put on you new robes of intelligence. Thereupon you will find yourself clad with the knowledge that creeds are transient things, yes, very clouds of dust, thick enough at the time, and so tickling human organs that they can but cough and sneeze out the same dust with much repetition and great noise, but clearing away gradually, and after a little not a sign of it left: or if you will seek it, you must look on the ground, down to which it has settled, and men treading on it. Where now are the Greek deities, that banished Anaxagoras, burned the books of Protagoras and tipped the hemlock to the lips of Socrates? What are they but the lone strifes of students and the sociable delights of poets? The Roman genius is dead, Rome's heroes myths. Is our Christianity that of Paul and the gospels, with their role of speedy Messianic splendors in a crystal sky? No; but a sober love of nature's order has clad our Christianity, as in a simple white stole, and we sleep no longer every night, like Paul and the seer of Patmos, looking to be awaked very likely by

the trumpet and the armies in the heavens and to be "caught up to meet the Lord in the air." We have unmantled us of an infallible church. Now are we unlacing from about us an infallible Bible and miraculous Christ. The Trinity, the Mediator, the Atonement, Everlasting Punishment and Election, are old garments, no more even to be patched, but just hung away as they are. Salvation no more is to be found in Baptism or Eucharist, nay, the word itself has "suffered a sea-change;" "those are pearls that were," its fiery eyes,

"And to be saved is only this,  
Salvation from our selfishness."

Yea, and all the miracles, of Old and New Testament together, as many think, and as truly to be honest I must say, are on the march to the kingdom of sweet shadows. What field for Faith is here, what room for it in such a procession, what rock for it in such a flood, and what a sad, sorry creature is man, if Faith, which so dearly the soul cherishes, be but a fond or frightened or fanatic clinging to a log of creed floating by in a freshet of passion.

These now are five good reasons, without seeking others, why it is bad and untruthful to view Faith as the embracing of a particular body of doctrines, or a passion of embrace of it: 1. That this leads to lack of all scruples in believing: 2. That it breeds a very vile pride of mind: 3. That it puts out the lamp of doubting and

questioning: 4. That it confounds moral distinctions: 5. That History soon puts her besom to it if we let her in.

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### CHAPTER III.

**That, nevertheless, in the Study of Faith we must set out from the Facts as they are.**

BUT now it may be said,—'Tis true indeed that these evils come of unreasoning and fanatical devotion to a creed; wherefore they would be good reasons against confusing Faith with this same creed-believing if Faith had any better character to offer for itself. But in truth Faith is no more than another name for fanatical belief in a creed—a name by which to gild over the coarse stuff of the fact. 'Tis mere prejudice, slavishness, passion, frenzy, “essentially irrational, blind and the fruit of ungoverned imaginations,” “invoked sometimes to make up for the silence of reason and sometimes to constrain the reason to be silent,” Faith is no more than the turmoil, tumult and fury of the creed-passion.

Well, if this be so, then we have in Faith but another soft-draping word for an ill and hard thing. But I think 'tis worth searching whether there be not a central spiritual fact in us belonging to the word;—or rather I would say the word belongs to the fact, and has sprung from it. And having searched, I think I find it indeed. Men have

felt somewhat stir by nature in the depths of them which in act, to the great sorrowing and suffering of many innocents, they confused with creed-fervor and belief, which, notwithstanding, they could not think to be exactly the same with mental assent however fanatical. From the effort of men to name this somewhat has sprung the word Faith—so I think. In searching whether this be true or not, we must gather first all the facts that have marked what men have called Faith and take the light of them. We must set out from the ancient and present struggles of human nature. If Faith be a mistake, an interesting superstition, though it has swept solemn harmonies from people, statesmen, philosophers, from high and low alike, saints and sinners, learned and ignorant, carved huge things from the stony Hebrew pride and soothed their fanaticism to psalms, inspired Paul, Alfred, Aquinas, St. Louis, Wicliff, Huss, and the thousand such, yea, and multitudes who from no historic vantage and grand spectacle but by their dark obscurity the more shone in the flames mayhap to their Lord's eyes, yea, and the Sacred Seven, who continually speak of Faith as breath of life—has done all this and yet be but a fiery superstition, how better or more quickly unmask it than by bringing together its marks till these show it is no more than a fanatic belief, not to be distinguished from a blind devotion to a particular creed; wherefore, not only a passing phase, but now nearly past, the foe of light and letters. But,

contrariwise, if there be aught in the soul, a joined trust and thought, which *is* different from intense assent to any special creed or system, nay, perhaps is the direct opposite thereof, which has in truth an object related to it in the facts of Creation and but one sole possible object,—if this be so, then this too we can find no sooner than by searching out the *unities* or *constant terms* in all the forms which Faith has taken.

Thus we shall set out from the beating human heart, which will give us a warm speeding, and from the compared facts covered heretofore by the name of Faith, which will give us firm ground and good method.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### **That Faith is a Universal Fact.**

Now in setting forth to observe the facts or marks of Faith, we see forthwith that Faith is universal. 'Tis not the trait of any one sect or religion or people. It belongs to man. Wherever man is, if he have come to a little thought, feeling and worship, he begins to speak of Faith. 'Tis not confined to civilized Europeans, nor to cultivated Greeks, nor to prophetic Jews, nor to fiery Arabians, nor to barbarians; but all have it. Neither does learning out-learn it nor ignorance come short of it. The Druid willingly would be stabbed with his own golden knife for his sacred mistletoe.



The Goth sailed up the Egyptian rivers after Valhalla and Odin. The dialectical Socrates prophesied to the Dikasts like an oriental mystic. He was an Elijah speaking Greek and infected with a passing mood of argument. No high place is there, no low place, where the name or the characteristic fact of Faith appears not. 'Tis like the atmosphere wherein the atoms move about while the whole is unchanged, so that the same self particles redden the blood of Esquimaux and Hindoo, now one, now the other. Like the air, too, while it is one thing and reddens all blood, 'tis a different matter in the blood that rumbles in a barbarian's skull-caverns and in the tide that sets flushing and murmuring the gulfs of a philosopher's or poet's soul. But whatever be the genius, I believe it but spreads the more to Faith the more the mind is round and continental. I mean not merely that this would seem to me the nature of such a mind, but that so the facts are. The high intelligence studies Faith and draws fine lines like a delicate instrument, making nice distinctions and boundaries, but discards it not as a false thing, nor slights it as a little matter.

Faith was, I think, the strongest bond in the middle ages between the untaught people and the clerks or clergy who alone could read and write. Afterward, when all the clerks and people together got more light, and, what was more perhaps, learned better to use the beams of the lamps they had, Faith was but lighted up, not cast away into night

nor left in dark corners. When learning upsprung, like an old seed new-upturned to the air, when thereof the people got some share and began to be better educated, when thereby thought took a wonderful start like a tree that stood barren till the turf became juicy, and when thereby individuality was unfolded, diversity of character was brought forth, and many shades of open and secret opinion came out, like colors from one light, and when thereupon freedom had grown so strong that if a tyrant spilled a martyr's life he but made himself a Deucalion tossing behind him the grandmother's bones, and straightway the earth was filled with ready martyrs,—then was Faith more loudly sung than ever, more carefully defined, more earnestly claimed by all the parties, while they all together yet knew so little of it, that each denied it to the others. And so has it been down to this our own day. There lack not men who scout it, mistaking it; but yet never was anything, I think, more venerated and cherished than now this same ancient thing called Faith.

Faith is universal, nowhere lacking, everywhere plentiful.

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## CHAPTER V.

**That there is an Intellectual Element in Faith.**

LOOKING now at the nature or elements of this Faith, which as to extent is universal, we see that it has contained always an intellectual element.

This is to say that though the confounding of Faith with belief in a creed is an error which has wrought many evils, yet this error is not to be viewed as having no truth in it. In fact it will be wise and philosophical to think that this error is but the setting forth of an intellectual or concluding element in Faith over-plainly, even unto monstrosity. For the most terrible monsters are not those made up of parts all false and only imagined, but those whose natural and proper parts are changed in proportions, one dwarfed and another made huge, but all real and each needful in its proper bulk. Therefore 'tis fairly to be supposed that Faith involves belief in somewhat, and has in it a rational or reasoning element, a conviction of the truth of some thought or view; for never was Faith anywhere without this element, and it is so important, indeed, as to be mistaken for the whole of Faith, as I have said. Faith everywhere has fastened to a creed, a scheme of doctrines, and these taken commonly on some authority whose reverend sanctity and right to obedience is another element of belief. But indeed, though the appearance of this element in Faith be plain and notable, yet we might assume it by sheer reason; for could Faith, which so has moved men, be no more than a laying hold of *something* tenaciously with no questioning of *what* is laid hold of? Surely not. It seems in truth to "go without saying," and I need spend no more words on it, that Faith, though not belief in a particular creed, has an

intellectual element in it, and involves belief or conviction of somewhat.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### **That there is an Emotional Element in Faith.**

IF farther we go on to observe Faith as it appears among men, having seen that it is universal and intellectual, we shall see that also it is emotional, and that this is a very notable point in it. For not only is there always an element of feeling in Faith, but 'tis like to be very strong feeling. Faith shows not only emotion, but fervid vehement, passionate earnestness. The belief on which Faith lays hold pertains to religion. It is looked on as saving and necessary. Within it is all peace and joy, without it is terror and ruin. The belief or creed gives rest, and rouses trust into an ardor. It is salvation. Faith adds love and hope to belief, and rejoices to lean and to feel protected. The Apostle has it that "Faith worketh by love," and that it is "the assurance of (or giving substance to) things hoped for." It pertains to the unseen, mysterious, awful, holy, and awakes the fervor which goes with such meditations. Sometimes, by reason of the strong emotional element in Faith, we use the word of other than religious matters, yet always with somewhat of a religious feeling or sense, an idea of trust, beauty, power; as when we speak of faith in a friend, in a

cause or reform, in an institution, charity, government, or even in a business or enterprise; in like manner, faith in luck, which then is a superstition. Everywhere, feeling is supreme, not as against thought, but as the breath and spirit of thought, or by another figure, the fire of thought, thought being the altar which without the flame and incense is but a stone. Religion has been called "morality suffused with emotion;" which, though it be little worth as a philosophy or account of religion, is notable as illumining the value of feeling in Faith. 'Tis surely the union of strong feeling with belief which has given Faith its hold on the world; whence emotion is much to be noted and considered in a study of the true meaning and nature of Faith.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### **That Faith always appears as above Doubt.**

FOR the fourth mark or element of Faith, having seen that Faith is universal, intellectual, emotional, we discern that it is a perfect assurance of the mind and clad with authority above doubt. To say this otherwise, not only is Faith a belief and a trust; the belief is invincible, the trust entire, neither the one to be doubted nor the other ever to fail. Nay, so implicit and so high above doubt does Faith show itself, that 'tis not enough that Faith may not be doubted; not even may it be

examined; nay, it appeals even to no proofs, but declares itself its own proof and above all arguments, like seeing, hearing, consciousness. In truth Faith sets itself forth as the proof of proofs, not to be argued, but the ground of other argument. For itself, it is only to be taken, neither questioningly by the reason nor slackly by the heart, but embraced with a holy passion. Faith—so writes a religious thinker—is “exempt from doubts and disquietude; it directs man in his judgments and actions with an imperial authority which he dreams not of eluding or contesting; it is natural, sure, practical, sovereign;” and faith in aught, he says, as in a law, means that men “acknowledge and accept it as a legitimate sovereign; that their understanding honors itself in contemplating it, and their liberty in obeying it.” \* So exacting is this assurance of Faith, so high will it place itself, that even the conscience is not proof against the tyranny of it, or the attraction of it, if tyranny be thought too hard a word. If a doubt invade any belief which is an element of a Faith, how honest soever the doubt be, how simple and unsought and natural soever, very often the hardest point to meet, the sorest struggle, wherein spiritual manhood most is put to its quality, is the mistaken rebuke of conscience. For as George Eliot says of character, so must we of conscience, the heart of character, that it “is not cut in marble; it is not something solid and

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\* Guizot, in Noyes' "Collection of Theological Essays."

unchangeable. It is something living and changing, and may become diseased as our bodies do." By this tenderness of conscience, under the robes of Faith when Faith is confounded with belief in creeds, like a body too warmly clad and too much housed, trembling with a rough or cool wind, good men have been harassed greatly, yea, shaken sorely, when they have been caught in a chill of doubt. The feeling is like the rebuke of conscience for a wrong, a foul deed, and hardly is to be known from it, and never if the soul be affrighted too soon and too much. Noble spirits thus have been wrung by conscience as by the agonies of remorse, or driven with terror from the first stirrings of divine reason in them: like Pascal, who felt with horror the strife of his reason and his Faith beginning and growing in him, and violently stifled it by imposing silence on his reason.\*

But what need of more words on this point? Anyone may see, who will look, whether in or out of books, that what men call Faith is marked everywhere by an assurance above doubt, an authority beyond question. And I think it needs as few words to say that this is a very needful mark of Faith; because it is necessary to us to have something above all doubt. We have imperious need of the fixed, the immutable, "an anchor of the soul." For we must move, not only in body but in mind, journeying and revolving in thought; and unless there be something fixed, sure, unquestion-

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\* Vacherot, "La Religion," p. 326.

able, immutable, like an axis around which we may turn through Thought's heavens but never be torn from our stability, or like a shore to which we are connected by the very seas we voyage on, unless, I say, we have such a fixity, our motion hath no bearing but is only a straying, hath no force to make head, being but a straggling; and if we hail from no port we can be bound to none. Wherefore this attribute of Faith, that it is assurance above doubt, is a necessity to us, that we may have an immutable ground, "an anchor of the soul" which, as the apostolic epistle says, is "both sure and steadfast and entereth into that which is within the veil."

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## CHAPTER VIII.

**That these Elements in Faith show the Human Search for the Absolute and the Perfect.**

THUS far we have come to the noting four great marks of Faith as always it has shown itself,—that Faith lives everywhere, having no climate or epoch or people or condition for *habitat*, but at home in all these, like a *genus* of plants which thrives at the snow-line and at tropical river-beds; that Faith has an element of reason and thought in it, an intellectual part, being a firm hold on a belief, a mental declaration; that Faith has great feeling in it, an element of strong emotion, being a fervor of trust, dependence and devotion; that in



these elements of mind and heart, of belief and feeling, Faith holds itself above all doubt or question. These now are the four marks of Faith we have come at,—Universality, Intellectuality, Emotion, Certitude. That I have taken herein but a broad and general view I admit readily, and it were easy to ask the parts of the parts, the elements of the elements; the marks of the marks, unto a minute and long analysis. But what use of this if the broad outlines, the large and compound marks, suffice to direct our journey to Faith? And as these four have led me to such a view of Faith as both contents and rejoices me, I will hope by them to lead the reader to the same. But if when I come to the place whither these point me, the reader find my Faith not a fruit garden, as to me it seems, but dry sand, let him turn back to this point and take a new start by the nicer study of these four marks in the marks of the marks.

For these four marks or traits now, let us associate them, and read their meaning as they go together like notes in a melody, and their sweetness as they sound in one like tones in a harmony. In this cherished thing called Faith, which as to spread is universal, and as to nature is a mighty believing and a rapture of trust and of undoubtingness, I read with reverence, nay, with awe, the search of the human soul everywhere for the Absolute and Perfect, for that which "hath no variableness neither shadow of turning," which can not

change nor ever has changed, the immutable, the eternal, the truth unaffected by space or time, the infinite, the all-good, the all-beautiful, the all-mighty. For the Perfect, Absolute, Infinite, is the same in every time and place; which answers to the universality of the fact of Faith, and to the undoubtingness and certitude of it. The Infinite, Perfect, Absolute, stand veritably in the pure reason of man, in the necessary laws of thought, in the strictness of conclusions, in ideal conceptions and their relations as in the mathematics; which answers to the intellectual element in Faith. The Absolute, Infinite, Perfect, the Whole, is full of beauty, of beauty and majesty unspeakable, clothed upon with light for garments, and accompanied with starry worlds for pomp; which answers to the emotions and raptures of Faith. Wherefore surely it is to be said with joyful confidence, nay, I must think, with the very joy of seeing and hearing, that Faith, which is universal, intellectual and reasoning, emotional and rapturous, and flowing around these traits with a light, if so I may express myself, which is as undoubtful to the soul's eye as the sun to the body's—this Faith, I say, is the human striving and the soul's prayer, "as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be," for the Infinite and the Perfect. The spirit of man must make its abode in the Immutable, and there set its adoration, its sense of sanctity, its peace and health. In a bit of folklore, it is told that a certain man had ears so quick

that he could hear the grass grow; and in sooth the thought is not foolish to science. But for a finer hearing still, let him who lists—for any ear is quick unto this, if it will be—hearken, and he shall hear the universal life, under the individuality of man, growing into the light and air; and though not at first in fine forms, but in the coarse and rude shapes of early Faith, like the first creatures of the earth, yet also, like those creatures, impressive, mighty, titanic.

'Tis a fashion now in philosophy—and has been more the mode, for I think it is fading—to treat slightly, and even contemptuously, this outreaching for the Perfect, the absolute, the necessary. They forwardly and assumingly put it away, as old coins into a cabinet, current once but now only curious to antiquarians. But 'tis not this striving and outreach of soul, I dare to think, but the different phases of men's thinking about it, that are fashions; for the primitive forth-striving of spirit which has lasted till now, is not an event, like this or that or the other thought about it, but Nature, which knows no fashion. The great truth is that humanity thus *has* striven without ceasing, nor is any time so early nor any people so low as that they exist before this striving appears; and this is the one fact underlying all forms of human endeavor. As when it was alleged against song "that before poets began to be in price," the people set their hearts on real things instead of fables, Sidney answered, "What that before time

was I think scarcely Sphinx can tell, since no memory is so ancient that gives not the precedence to poetry,"\* so may we answer respecting Faith. The human spirit always will seek to root its nature in the absolute and necessary, that its thoughts may have reality in them, agreeing with the truth and nature of things. With this, the earth and sky become alike to it, as to a creature with wings.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### **That Faith must be Completed with an Object.**

HERE now have we these four facts in Faith, that it is *believing* or *intellectual*, that it is *fervently trustful* or *emotional*, that both the belief and the trust are *implicit with an assurance above all question*, and that withal Faith is *a universal fact*, present in all human societies. If now these four facts be true traits or elements of faith (as surely it is right to infer that the first three are, from the fourth, the universality of them), then plainly we have to complete the definition of Faith by the object of it. For belief and trust are forth-goings of the mind, and are naught without an object. Faith then will have reached the whole truth of itself and have come to its stature when it shall lay hold of such an object that both belief and trust in the object

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\* "Defense of Poesie."

may be rationally implicit and perfect, and, if rational, then universal.

Now here we must fasten "with hooks of steel" to the sure truth that the object of Faith must be very sublime. For it must satisfy and fill not only the intelligence (which so widens day by day that naught but sublimity will fill it) but also, and what is more perhaps, Faith's object must content the emotions which look so high and are so mighty that only the most sublime beauty and grand glory will engage them. Nor can I better say this, than in the words of Guizot on this point of the object of Faith, which he has considered much in his essay. He says, "As soon as Faith exists, all search after truth ceases; man holds himself to have arrived at his object; his belief is no longer for him anything but a source of enjoyments and precepts; it satisfies his understanding and governs his life, bestows on him repose, and regulates and absorbs, without extinguishing, his intellectual activity; and directs his liberty without destroying it." \* This remark touching liberty is true, indeed, of Faith come to the truth of itself and its full stature or being; and 'tis such a very object of Faith that now we inquire for, as can engage perfect implicit belief and trust and yet leave freedom untainted and joyful. But to Guizot again. He says, "A belief so complete, so accomplished, that all intellectual labor seems to have reached its termination, and that man, wholly

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\* Noyes' "Collection of Theological Essays," p. 13.

united with the truth of which he thinks himself to be in possession, loses all thought of the path which has conducted him to it,—so powerful that it takes possession of the exterior activity, as well as of the human mind, and makes submission to its empire in all things a passionate necessity, as well as a duty,—an intellectual state, which can be the fruit, not only of the exercise of the reason, but also of a powerful emotion, and of a long submission to certain practices, and in the midst of which, when it has been once developed, the three grand human faculties are actively employed, and at the same time satisfied,—the *sensibility*, the *intelligence*, and the *will*;—such a condition of soul, and such a belief, demand in some sort occasions worthy of it, and must be produced by subjects which embrace the entire man, and put into play all his faculties, and answer to all the demands of his moral nature, and have a right, in turn, to his devotedness. Intellectual beauty and practical importance, appear then, *a priori*, to be the characteristics of the ideas proper for becoming the materials of Faith. An idea which should present itself as true, but at the same time without arresting by the extent and gravity of its consequences, would produce certitude; but Faith would not spring from it. And so practical merit—the usefulness of an idea—would not suffice for begetting Faith; it must also draw attention by the pure beauty of truth. In other words, in order that a simple belief, natural or scientific, should become

Faith, it is necessary that its object should be able to procure the pleasures of activity as well as of contemplation, that it may awaken in the mind the double sentiment of its high origin and power: in short, that it should present itself before man's eyes as the mediator between the moral and the ideal world,—as the missionary charged with modeling the one on the other, and of uniting them."\*

Here do we see in these good and true words, as I have said, that we must look for the object of Faith in some high sublimity; for truly Faith is a sublime thing within man and will go forth not at all except to a sublimity which includes man. Where, then, is the object of Faith, and what is it? What is that which has no transientness, no "shadow of turning," no wavering nor trembling nor mortality?—for the object must be so, since Faith is above doubt. What is that which is holy truth, sacred order, harmony, reason, drawing homage from instructed man universally?—for the object must be these, since Faith is intellectual? What is that which is very mighty, comprehending man in a higher order, above him and around him, and he of it, safe, not to be shaken nor overthrown nor harmed nor even attacked, benign to man and to all creatures and mighty in the benignity—What is that?—for so must the object be, since Faith is trust and emotion. And what is that which in all these things is sublime, is majesty, able to engage that sublimity, Faith, which is such a reach of

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Noyes' "Collection of Theological Essays," p. 20-21.

reason, such a hold of trust, such a forth-calling and inspiriting of feeling?

With this object, the account or definition of Faith must be completed.

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## CHAPTER X.

### **That the Object of Faith is the Universe.**

HERE let me repeat again the four great traits which we have *observed* in that human experience which men have called Faith. These four traits are—That the experience is universal, appearing everywhere; that it is intellectual, a belief; that it is emotional, a fervency and a trust; and that, once taken, it is held above all doubt or question. And some point of assurance which hath a depth or a height out of reach of doubt is necessary to us, as in Chapter VII. I have said.

The object of Faith concordant with these elements must be, as in the last chapter I have sought to unfold, true, constant, everlasting, sublime, which is to utter, with some expansion, the three household words of divinity and philosophy, “the good, the beautiful and the true.” For the sublime is the beautiful, and somewhat more; also the constant and everlasting must be good, since the good can vary in no way unless it be conceived the uncompleted good, in growth, and then in no way but to become the better, in which still it is the good.

I am ready now to say that there can be but



one object essential to the finishing of the account of Faith. This I say in accordance with the universality which is one of the four marks of Faith. For what can be the force of this mark but that Faith, as in its lower forms, so in its most instructed excellence and stature, is a natural experience?—therefore not cast off nor outgrown the while man has been rising and growing in mind, but rather, like life itself, the principle or power of the growth, and sure to be forth-putting in whatever forms the time and place will bear, now in coarse forms, afterward in beautiful; but all the forms strong and very living. Whence it is right to declare essential to Faith only such an object as acknowledges Faith to be possible to any man at any point of mind-growth, most learned or least learned, and the higher the intelligence, the surer the Faith.

Now for this, as I have said, I know but one object; for one man may doubt this thing or deride that, and another may doubt another thing or scorn another; but what man, in his right mind and but of even a little sound knowledge, will scruple at the Whole or scout the Universe? Men will differ much in their views or beliefs touching the Universe; in their speculative thoughts, I mean, as in the questions how it came to be, whether it be material or spiritual, what means Creation, or Evolution, and the like. But they will not disagree in acknowledging the Universe and in giving respect to Power in it.

The Universe, therefore, is the one object of Faith necessary to complete the definition of Faith; which is to say, *essential* to Faith. This satisfies, as I have said, the universality of Faith, namely, the existence of Faith everywhere and under all mental conditions; for the Universe is the object which all men of every degree must acknowledge, accept and regard; and in fact they do so. But the Universe as the object of Faith satisfies also the three other qualities of Faith, namely, that it is intellectual, that it is emotion, that it is above doubt.

The Universe, the World, the Order, the Kosmos, is Fact, that is, the Made, the Done, the Thing so as it is; which commands and arouses our intellectual being.

Also, the Order is glorious and sublime; wherein it satisfies the emotional quality of Faith. This is easy to say, as so it is to see; but if I must bring it in words to one who hath not seen, I had need of the speech of an archangel. And what man, if he be not twisted all awry in his heart, and if he have a parcel of knowledge, though small mayhap, yet too large to be a mote in his eye, or else none (for often I mark that a man may see clearly with no knowledge, by a kind of excellent simplicity of nature, and clearly too with much knowledge, but is sand-blind with knowing a little),—what such man, I say, will make light of the Universe or misprize the Whole, the Order and *Kosmos* of All Things; nay, will not

reverence it with trust and emotion, seeing plainly, however he speculate one way or another, seeing plainly, I say, that the Universe is sublime Moral Order, bringing to light Reason, Right, Benefit and Beauty?

Lastly, the Universe is unchangeable and everlasting; for being the Whole, how should it change to be any part, and being Order, how should it become disorder, and being existent, how should it cease to be? Nay; but however the parts change, coming, going, growing, dying, evolving and following one another in new shapes, the Whole is the same in itself; for the parts can not change to become disorder. Wherefore the Order is unchangeable; and the parts move and dash only as waves do, while the sea is the same. This satisfies the assurance of Faith, its quality to disdain doubt.

This I will take leave to offer in other words, and a little more at length. The Universe is truth, ORDER, and these in sublimity and everlastingness. Therefore our intelligence is drawn forth, even to the point of serving the Universe obediently; because our own destiny is a part of it, and hence our duty to ourselves, our *true* duty according to our real nature, is our duty also to the Universe. Also we must revere; for the Universe not only includes and holds us, but instructs, disciplines; and while we glory in our freedom, as in the fellowship of mighty beings, anon we are hushed before this solemn, sublime

order of things which involves and comprehends our freedom, passes through and all around our freedom, in a mighty and holy mystery. Finally we must trust to the Universe; we can not doubt, there is no room wherein to turn sceptical of it. The direct historical sight that the Universe has truth at interest, that things come forth to view evermore as truly they are, and reasonable thoughts prevail and right comes uppermost and all that is true and right is safe—this sight of the Whole is itself a ground or sanction of our doubting any reputed thing, if the mind and knowledge work to such a doubt. For we see that we make not truth, nor create power for it, but do no more than help it to a position before men's eyes; and even to that post we can not forward truth overmuch, for it will come thither without us or in spite of us. We perceive that things are the same after any doubt of ours as before; wherefore, we may entertain any doubt as possible light, or journey to the light, but no possible ban or condemnation or injury. But the Whole, the Order, this, I must dare to say, can not be doubted, at least sanely, neither its safety nor our own realm in that safety. There is contrariety in the thought. How can we doubt that whose nature and visible carriage of itself for the truth is the ground, sanction, safety and possible benefit of the act of doubting anything?

Doubt is the half of thinking; for if we can not doubt, we can not begin to think, and if we can

not be convinced, we can not end thinking. Therefore, first doubt, then conviction, afterward doubt again, rejected convictions, new convictions, this is the history of progress, the way of truth. But the course of history is the method of the Universe; and the Universe is the oneness of all these varying doubts and convictions, namely, whatever truth they contain, and is the power which involves them and passes through and around them.

I will ask the reader's favor to repeat here the substance of this chapter in brief summaries:—

There are four chief marks or qualities of Faith:

1.—Faith is universal, present always and everywhere. This quality is satisfied by the Universe as the object of Faith because the same skies cover all men, and there can be no manner of man who will not acknowledge the Universe and do respect to the Power in it.

2.—Faith is intellectual. This quality is satisfied by the Universe as the object of Faith because the Universe is the infinite assembling of things in a co-ordination which offers room for vast reasonings, conclusion, belief.

3.—Faith is emotion. This quality is satisfied by the beauty, glory, sublimity of the Universe.

4.—Faith is above all reach of doubt. This quality is satisfied by the Universe as the object of Faith because the Universe is constant and can be no otherwise; "the same yesterday, to-day and

forever," with "no variableness neither shadow of turning," neither any darkness of fainting or growing weary, and among the stars "not one faileth."

Have we not seen now, to this point, that the Universe satisfies all the conditions of the object of Faith? It is, then, the object that may complete the definition of Faith. But more than this, it is the one only object *essential* to Faith. For, as I will say once more, the Universe alone satisfies the condition that the object must be known and accepted *everywhere*. For any other object would define Faith to be such a thing as one man may have but another not, by reason of their different beliefs touching the object. But this by no means we should do; but interpret the universality of Faith, and its continuance in human growth, nothing short of its being proper to human nature and belonging to every man in health of mind let him deny *what he can*. For the essential object of Faith must be that which deny he *can not*. The Universe is that object. Men may differ in beliefs about the Universe, but not in believing in it; and all objects of Faith otherwise named are but the Universe *plus* certain views of the Universe, or the Universe as described and shaped by apprehension one way or another.

If any say that this is not true, because there are pessimists abroad who despise the Universe and call it ill-conceived, I answer that Faith is natural, and yet not all have it, as also the case is with sight and hearing. Pessimists I can treat

only as just so unwhole and unhealthful. If all parts be balanced and in health, I can not believe a pessimist possible. They will scout this view of them and say it is ignorant or little-minded. But I may opine a deficiency without having a contempt for it. If a blind man should insist that all were blind and had but a phantasy of seeing, I could not agree with him, but must be sorry for him respectfully, let him call me what he would.

Therefore, I conclude, and say again, that all the qualities of the nature of Faith, and the universality of it among men, are satisfied by this one object of it, namely, the Universe as a moral conception, as Order which brings to pass truth and right. He who accepts the Universe in this manner is a man of Faith, however he doubt or hesitate or hang poised regarding any other belief whatsoever.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### **True Definition of Faith.**

WE have seen, as I hope, that Faith is universal (Chapter IV.), that it is intellectual (Chapter V.), emotional (Chapter VI.), indubitable (Chapter VII.), and that the one object of Faith which answers to all these qualities is—the Universe. Now, by this object we may give a brief definition of Faith. For Faith is the human spirit, which is to say,

reason and feeling, expended on this object. Hence if we express the disposition of the soul in terms of this object, we shall define Faith.

For a brief definition, I will offer one modeled on Hegel's description of Liberty, which is the most splendid in the world, namely that "Freedom is the spirit's realization of its own nature." In like manner, FAITH IS THE SPIRIT'S REALIZATION OF THE NATURE OF THINGS. To say the same with a figure, FAITH IS THE SOUL'S BAPTISM INTO THE UNIVERSE.

Men are baptized into churches and creeds. This is to accept some particular belief. But this is not Faith. Faith is nobler. It is baptism into the Universe as a sacred conception, a moral order which brings truth to light.

From the letter of a friend to me I take the following, which expands this definition of Faith:

"I cannot see the end of much that I must do, I cannot predict, but I have learned that the greatest test any one can be put to is to go fearlessly on in the right; and have Faith enough to rest therein, looking neither backward nor forward, up nor down—rest I say in the sense of stability as a rock in the hillside, as though there were no yesterday. The hill bore the storm then; it is gone; it has the sunshine of to-day; it is ready for to-morrow. I have several experiences of the wonderful discipline there is in Faith, and the definition thereof is now realized to my mind. Faith is a misapplied word when set to the theological



scheme as the way of salvation; Faith to me now is something which follows truthful, disinterested, sincere action, and stands waiting to see whether you will accept whatever comes of such conduct, though it lead where you know not, see not, away entirely from your own plan. The point is whether I shall wish I had not done this or that, whether I shall wish another way had been chosen, whether I will seek to retrace steps, or whether I can say, I saw not, and yet I acted to do right. Gloom and anxieties followed and beset me everywhere, light has not come, night has set in; still the right existed all the same, and it follows not that it was wrong because building thereon all was not to be illuminated immediately. When thus I have thought, then the rest I have spoken of comes in, a something which does not permit of carrying yesterday into to-day's work, or of shadowing to-morrow before it comes. Then Faith stands waiting to see whether you are willing to leave results to the right of yesterday to work its own way, though not your way. I have learned a little of it, feebly indeed yet, but I have seen enough light to gladden my heart on the way. I hope to have greater knowledge."

If a plain summary and analytical definition be desired, I will offer it thus: Faith is an affection of the mind toward the Universe in three ways—1.—Apprehension or belief that the Universe is Moral Order: 2.—Implicit trust in the Moral Order, above doubt, void of fear: 3.—Emotion, joy, awe,

reverence, aroused by the beauty, glory, sublimity of the Universe.

As I have said before (Chapter VIII.), I am far from conceiving that this account of Faith describes in full the only vast capacity of soul which hath gone under this name. Faith hath many beautiful aspects, many rich and deep relations in religion, delicate traits and activities of spiritual life, which I have not so much as looked toward herein; nay, I think that Faith very like can not be described in its fulness with our present knowledge of religion. For there seems much to be gathered yet before we can know the depth of the fulness of any term in religion. Yet I think the account of Faith foregoing herein will give us to know it not untruthfully, albeit not completely; and especially that the four traits which we have found in Faith lead us trustworthily to the object of it. So that we may rest securely in this, that Faith is Universal, Intellectual, Emotion, Certitude; whereof the one *essential* Object is the Universe.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### **The Beauty and Glory of this View of Faith.**

THE exceeding worth of Faith, as this view of it sets it forth, the beauty of it to the mind and the joy of it to the spirit, deserve to be said briefly under five heads, in ending the first Book of this little treatise.

1.—Faith, as herein it is conceived, as Trust in the Universe, or The Spirit's Realization of the Nature of Things, is delightful and refreshing because it frees us from the tyranny of conscience over thought. I am sure it is common experience that, if one be trained and instructed to take certain doctrines for Faith, or to reverence the receiving of them as an act of Faith, then if by dint of reason which he can not withstand he begin to doubt and thereupon to examine, conscience makes a false charge on him. He feels a reproach, as if he were doing wrong. The inward monitor, because astray under the fogs of teachings and associations which are holy and precious, distinctly tells him that he doubts wickedly and ought to put away his profane questioning. At least, I can answer in myself that conscience does so, and from thoughtful other persons I have both heard and read of like sufferings. Now, all this erring tyranny, these false pangs, vanish at once before the light and virtue of the truth of Faith, that it is trust in the Universe. For with this Faith naught is to be feared from any questioning of the Universe or search of it, which is what an exercise of the reason is. Thus we may hold a belief very reverently and tenderly, and yet, by reason of Faith, be not agonized, if it be questioned either in our own soul or by others.

2.—This high Faith is a joy and glory also because it is the source of the unmixed joy of a

thought. A thought is the effect on us of a relation of things in the Universe. It is a blissful perception that something is true, or a brave guess that something may be true. Now if thought be free and unreproached in this exercise, the sight or the surmise is an exceeding great joy. What bliss, but the love that follows thought, is to be compared to the joy of a thought?—if it be free. For thought is like the body, which being made in order to move, if it be chained so that it can not move, then the effort to move is pain. But the joy of a thought, of a sight of what something is in the Universe or an image of what it may be, is very great, if the thought move without fetters or reproaches. Therefore true Faith renders thought a pure joy, an exuberant delight, because Faith makes thought free of the Universe, bidding it enter,—search, possess, fear nothing, like a king at home.

3.—This view of Faith also awakes an ecstasy of sense of the beauty of the earth and of the human world on the earth. The physical loveliness of Nature becomes plainer and more delightful to eyes that look on Nature as a very excellent order, a glorious universe of lights and worlds of which our sunny earth is one, all arrayed together in an order and perfectness which hath naught frightful in it, but every blessed thing, and is busy with bringing forth truth and publishing peace. So, too, in the moral world of men, very beautiful is human life and radiant is history and rich the

human countenance unto eyes of Faith, that have sight of the simplicity of the moral law, and see all things working together to bring truth to light, and behold, as Socrates said, that "no evil can happen to a good man, either in this life or after death." The Faith which is the spirit's realization of the Nature of things gives us to look forth and see in this manner, and therefore brings the beauty of the heavens close to us.

4.—But more than this, Faith gives us to feel at home in the infinite beauty. A sense of kinship and unity therewith, very blessed, arises in us. This great beauty not only is beautiful but is *our* beauty. We are kin with it. Its sounds echo in us. Its lights reflect in us. It fits unto us. It is our home. The poet Vaughan says "Prayer is the world in tune," by which I suppose he means what Israel has sung richly in the Psalm CXLVIII. and again in another way in the Chapters xxxviii. and xxxix. of Job and again in "The Song of the Three Holy Children," and in many other places, to-wit, that the mingling of all the sounds of the earth is like an anthem of praise; for thus occur the words in Vaughan's song of *The Morning Watch*:

"O Joys! infinite sweetness! with what flowers  
And shoots of glory my soul breaks and buds!  
All the long hours  
Of night and rest,  
Through the still shrouds  
Of sleep and clouds,

This dew fell on my breast;  
O how it bloods  
And spirits all my earth! Hark! in what rings  
And hymning circulations the quick world  
Awakes and sings!  
The rising winds  
And falling springs,  
Birds, beasts, all things,  
Adore Him in their kinds.  
Thus all is hurled  
In sacred hymns and order, the great chime  
And symphony of Nature. Prayer is  
The world in tune,  
A spirit-voice  
And vocal joys  
Whose echo is heaven's bliss."

\* \* \*

Now, as the poet says that the tunefulness of all sounds together is a praise-hymn, or, as he has it, "Prayer is the world in tune," so may I say that Faith is the world and the soul attuned together, one to the other, the soul being brought to a sweet chord with the world and knowing the harmony with joy; or, as I may say, claiming the world and declaring it of itself and itself of the world. This sense of unity, of kinship, of peace, and of a tie of love that can not be unknit, is a beauty and light of simple and true Faith.

5.—Finally this Faith hath such a beauty and glory in it because it supports such a depth and earnestness and power of belief. Truly, what believers of any belief this Faith, being above all beliefs, makes! It is only they of this pure Faith

who are mighty in conviction and hold their thoughts with great strength. For being free, they believe what they believe, as first they gain it, with the might of their minds. And also, coming thus close to Nature, and with kinship of heart, continually they gather from Nature's lap new facts and riches to become objects of delightful conviction. Fichte describes the envy that the sensual man would feel if truly he could know for one instant the meaning of spiritual blessedness. In like manner, if they who talk loudly of their Faith, meaning thereby a polemic, a pugnacity for creed, or a contempt of reason and a giving up of themselves to forms and doctrines, could conceive for a moment the believing power of a man of true Faith, I am very sure they would be covered first with shame and then with joyful desire, saying like the disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration, "Let us build us tabernacles and stay here."

## BOOK SECOND.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### **Transition to Trust in our own Souls.**

THE first Book, if I have come at the truth, has brought us to this, that true Faith is Trust in the Universe. Or, in other phrase, Faith is Realization of the Nature of Things. From this we go on to one special part or form of trust in the Universe, namely, trust in our own souls; and to one particular part of the Realization of the Nature of Things, namely, realization of our own nature.

The transition is natural and inevitable. We can not avoid it. We must walk in the path of it, if we walk at all.

We weigh in our minds, we examine critically and we conclude as to the qualities and arrangement of the sensible things of the Universe. Nay, we test our conclusion and make knowledge of it by experiment; and experiment is in itself a subjecting of external things to our will, which then we go on to do still more by the knowledge which comes of experiment.

Moreover, the study of the outward and sensible Universe is very difficult. Long labor, patience,



devotion, ingenious devising, must go into it. We see this difficulty to be the price of the power, the natural tax, if so I may express it, levied on mind. For nothing is to be had without some effort, and the better things cost the more, and the exercise of intelligence has the very highest price affixed to it, which is to say, the greatest devotion and effort.

Therefore because we observe, search, study, affect the outward Universe, we must go on from it to the thought of that observing and studying power of us, which we name Mind or Soul. With this transition, the true idea of Faith leads us at once to a grand result touching ourselves, namely, that we may *trust our own souls!*

If we trust in the Universe, which is to say, trust the moral order thereof, then we must trust our reason, which is the seeing power of the soul; else how know we that we apprehend the moral order? With what surety of spirit can we trust anything if the eye of the mind which judges the trust be unsound and its pictures untrue, distorted? I deny not that the mind's eye, like the body's, must learn to see, and can not report truly without exercise and discipline. But unless with the discipline the mind soon see some things as they are, and grow in this power, gathering greater numbers of things continually into undistorted vision wherein they appear as they are, then to walk in any way is impossible. To trust anything if our faculty be distorted is only un-intelligent and perverse.

Moreover, it is a part and trait of trust in the moral order of the Universe that we are able to doubt anything, and to "test all things, holding fast to that which is good." Before we give trust to anything we may search whether really it be truth; that is, whether it belong in the Universe which we trust. But unless the mind be trustworthy and trusted, this doubt, suspension, examination, and indeed all effort, is but folly and mockery.

Therefore to be strong to hold this lofty doctrine of Faith, that it is Trust in the Universe, we must feed on the substance of the trustworthiness of our mental nature and follow reverently the lead of Reason. True, trustworthiness is not the same as infallible sight. We are but fallible and finite. Therefore we must be modest, sympathetic, impartial, careful, laborious. Nevertheless, we must have stable trust and belief in our mental being. We can go no step unto trusting the Universe if we confide not in our own souls; and yet, contrariwise, we can not come at all to this confidence in ourselves if we have not trust in the All. From Faith, which is trust in the Whole, unto trust in our own souls, and from this trust in the soul unto the trust of the Universe, which is Faith, there is transition either way, to and fro, nor can the one exist without the other.

Of this nature of Faith, that it is of a piece with trust in our own souls, Joseph Henry Allen has said nobly:\* "The facts of religious history teach

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\* Christian History, Third Period, p. 14.

us very little unless they teach us that a time of spiritual crisis has always to be met in just that way,"—namely, by a man's declaration of his own spiritual sight. "The strong conviction of one man must be brought face to face with whatever we can understand by the phrase 'powers of the world,'—whether prejudice of education, government authority, temptation of indolence, sympathy, friendship, interest, personal peace and quiet,—and must be strong enough to overcome.

"It must be the conviction of *one man standing alone*. A thousand more may do as he does, but each man's act must be his own. The encouragement of example, the sympathy of friends, the thousand wholesome influences that surround one, and keep his heart whole,—these are for ordinary men and for ordinary times. The moment of crisis, whether in a conspicuous epoch of history, or in one man's lonely struggle in the dark, demands a Faith that absolutely dispenses with them all."

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## CHAPTER II.

### **That Trust in the Soul has Fared Ill in History.**

IN truth I need say little, and linger not at all, on this proposition. For it is common report. What names have been given to trust in one's own soul? What but Heresy, Vanity, Pride, Arrogance, Obstinacy, Impiety, and many such-like. Fanati-

cism and Superstition always have called themselves Faith. Yet I should say they were the very opposites thereof. For, Faith is trust in the Universe; but is not Superstition of the very substance of being afraid in the Universe? And, Faith being calm with the sense of the Almightyness of the truth to prevail, is not Fanaticism the same as being fearful about the truth and thereupon taking it furiously under our patronage? Notwithstanding, these things, Fanaticism and Superstition, always have dubbed themselves Faith; and thereupon they have set up a creed, a book, a prophet, a ceremony, like the brazen serpent, saying it is the one way of salvation. Whereupon, to declare, by reason and on authority of one's own soul, that such a thing truly is not the one way of salvation, nor could be, and that no form or creed could be the one sole way—nay, not to *declare* in that manner, not so much as to declare, but even to doubt, this is held impiety and perdition. To give details and instances of this manner of putting away trust in the soul and of decrying it, were but to recite the history of any priesthood; nor is any more notorious in this point than the Christian priesthood.

Again, it has been very common in religion, and very notable in the Christian religion, to declare the world and mankind a fallen and apostate creation, overwhelmed with evil and with the ruin that comes of it. How then, in such a view, can there be a place for trust of our own

soul?—since that is as fallen and perverted as all else in creation, nay, by the fall and wickedness of the soul all other misery and perversion has come about.

Moreover, there is a reason in the very forms and creeds and traditions themselves why they can not be held erect unless the soul be put at fault and discredited. For these old forms and creeds stretch back into a mysterious antiquity filled with colors of miracles, with shining "wonders and signs," with all the wild imagery of a primitive and simple age. The forms or doctrines are as fantastic, rough, uncouth or cruel as the uninstructed, ignorant times that reared them. When mankind has grown older and gathered knowledge, these crude things of the childhood of the race are cast aside. But the priests will not have it so, and resist the progress. Therefore always it has been taught that there are sacred limits to human thinking, that the divine must be parted from the human (unnatural and impious divorce!) and the inquiring mind must busy itself with human things, having no part nor duty in the divine but to receive them obediently from that sacred past wherein it is said God talked with men, but now no longer he does so.

It is thus that Lord Bacon bewails the "intermingling of divine and human knowledge," and "the tempering of one with the other," because, says he, it has filled not only Science "full of speculative fictions and vanities," but divinity

"full of heresies." "More worthy it is," says he, "to believe than to think or know, considering that in knowledge (as now we are capable of it) the mind suffereth from inferior natures, but in all belief it suffereth from a spirit which it holdeth superior and more authorized than itself."\* Which is to say, we must hold it better to believe, on some great command, than to think for ourselves, because it is better to be subject to a high authority than to our own inferiority. But what a thing belief is, to be made a question of *expediency*! For it is a point of *duty* that we take ourselves and thereupon carefully employ ourselves in searching what is true; since if we can not lay down our answerableness unto the truth, neither can we delegate it to another, which is but another way of laying it down. And however at the end of a race the swifter genius will come out first, yet at the beginning all start from the same line of duty; and to be found on the road is faithfulness.

Furthermore, what a thought of a greater spirit is it, that he is to put out my spirit, and stop the putting forth of me in thought by filling me in with himself! Thus do plants and animals act in the rough jostling of nature. The giant trees cut off sun, air, rain, the earth's juices, from little seedlings, and shade them out of life; and the brute mother hides her young from the hunger of her mate. Yet even in this rough society, the lovely air-plant gains lodgment on a fork of a

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\* Valerius Terminus.

tyrannic tree; and there only resting, for a point of support, being no parasite, stealing no sap, it puts forth and hangs down its tresses of roots into the moist air, and opens leaves to the light. Soon the vapors and rays of its own gathering grow to a flower like a bright bird on the wing. So the soul finds a stay on a height attained by a noble spirit; whence then it will put forth *itself* and unfold from within, spreading forth to all helps and nourishments in earth and air and sky.

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### CHAPTER III.

**That the worst ill-fare of Trust in the Soul is in the Moral Sphere.**

THE denial of trust in the soul, and contemning of the "light that is in us," is repulsive and disheartening if confined only to philosophy or to any manner of thinking or to religion and spiritual things. But it could not stop with these; for man's being is a unit, and if he be untrustworthy in one way, why not in another,—*falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*? Besides, the spiritual and moral lie too close; nay, intermingled. Therefore distrust of the soul has invaded the moral sphere; wherein it is impious and confounding. Thus, Lord Bacon is at pains to rebuke "the aspiring desire to attain to that part of moral knowledge which defineth of good and evil, whereby to dispute God's commandments and not to depend on the

revelation of his will." Calvin explaining away from his instruction its enormous burden of injustice, contends that this is God's will as revealed in the Scriptures, and "What he wills," says Calvin, "must be considered just for this very reason, because he wills it. \* \* \* But if you go further and ask why he so determined, you are in search of something greater and higher than the will of God, which can never be found." Other philosophers and theologians have set forth the same doctrine with metaphysical subtlety and learning.\* Man, say they, may study himself and the physical creation; but if he push into the study of divine counsels, religious or moral, confusion follows him, and thereupon wickedness. Vain is it, and far aside from any moment, that the moral sense is shocked and confounded with the barbarities, cruelties, treacheries and lies, occurring in writings claiming to be revelations of God, as, for example, the curses of David on his enemies, the slaughter of the Midian women and children, the massacre of all the people of Jericho and of many cities, the fraud of Jacob, the allowance of slavery and of selfishness toward women."† These are divine morals, say these philosophers, inscrutable to us. Our conclusions of right and wrong, say they, are but rules of action relative to us, and have no right nor power to pass on immutable and absolute justice. We are to follow what is right *for us*,

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\* See Mansel's "Limits of Religious Thought."

† See Numbers XXXI.; Joshua VI., VII.; Deut. XXI., 12; Gen. XXVII.



say they; but as to divine goodness and justice, we are to take the Sacred Word as it is, nor dare submit it to profane questioning by our feeble and erring minds. Thus a written tradition puts out the light in us "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." In the name of God, horrible, brutal cruelties are forced on our minds to be approved and held holy deeds, by a book. This is the worst manner of distrust of our own souls. Every other profanity appears small beside it. If human morality unfold not in the image of the Eternal, and unless

"Nothing can be good in Him  
Which evil is in me,"

what have we to hold to in heaven or earth? All our religion then is this, that some *Rabbi* said that some *Ben-Rabbi* said that Moses said that these many dire cruelties and lies were commands of the Most High and were good and holy, howsoever among us now they be done only by the worst men. Nay, if the better and wiser we grow the worse these things look in our eyes, still they were ordained on those occasions by the All-Wise and All-Good, and thereby were right. There is no impiety like this impiety. There is no other thought in all the world so confounding and full of mischief. We may answer like as Job to his friends,\* Will ye falsify for God, as man will for man, to show favor to him? "Your memorable

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\* Job, XIII, 6-12.

sayings are proverbs of ashes, your defences are defences of clay."

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## CHAPTER IV.

### **That We must Trust our own Souls.**

By reason of the true doctrine of Faith, that it is Trust in the Universe, we are saved from needing to abase our own minds and doff the freedom of our spirits for the sake of any creed or institution or system of thought. For the Universe, in the moral order whereof our trust is, which trust is Faith, includes all creeds, institutions, systems, religions; sifts, purifies, judges them. And we know that whensoever or in whatsoever we have found the truth, in this belief or in that, the truth will survive; and whatsoever it be in which we have seen imperfectly and have mistaken somewhat for the truth, it is well that this should perish, and surely it will. Nay, it *is* perishing; its apparent thriving for a time is but the process of its perishing. And thereby it is taken from us; and if we have the right Faith, which is Trust in the Universe, the All, it is taken very gently and we find ourselves not left with naught but led unto what really is true.

In speaking of the Transition from the true doctrine of Faith to Trust in our own Souls, I said it was a necessary transition, because if our very being be untrustworthy by reason of distorted and

distorting faculty, we have no sane ground for judging or trusting aught whatever; and yet, contrariwise, I said that we can go no step unto Trust of ourselves but by means of Trust in the All. I wish now to lay stress on this latter averment, to the end of coming to this thought, namely, that if the All be trustworthy, so must our own souls be, with all the reason and sight and imagery and love of them, because the nature of the soul is part of the nature of the All. Are we not in and of the Universe? Is it not a surety that we must share its nature and primary being as well as its existence? And if the Universe be truth-unfolding, right-preserving, evil-overthrowing Order, surely it must be that reasoning and veracity in the nature of man is a part of the instrument of this righteousness. Wherefore we must trust our own souls if once we behold that the truth of Faith is Trust in the Universe, because we belong in the fact and in the nature which is to be trusted, which is the All.

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## CHAPTER V.

### **That our Spiritual Being corresponds to Nature.**

To continue that we must trust our own souls:

It is perceived that the human soul corresponds with visible Nature. The two are of the same pattern, run in like moulds. The ideas of the soul and the sensible facts of Nature agree and answer

perfectly. What is preserved and is fundamental in Nature, unfolded therein by the long process of the earth's gestation and of human history, that same precisely it is which the mind of man has pronounced most valuable and sacred in himself. Plato, in his *Timæus*, having happily discovered the correspondence of the soul and Nature, said the sensible World was one vast animal, endowed with sense and soul like to us, the visible things being the body of the creature, so that its motions and development in sensible Nature answer to us just as we resemble each other. An ancient and beautiful thought, embodied in many myths, is that there is a secret sympathy between the human spirit and material things, whereby the things in some way understand and sustain man's aspirations, sympathize with his griefs, shudder at his sins. Lovers in a legend perish under a mulberry tree; its white fruit becomes thenceforth forever red. The classical myths stock the earth and sky full of fountains, plants, works, constellations, which arise where a Daphne prays or an Adonis is gored or an Amphion strikes his lyre or an Andromeda accepts martyrdom. Poetry and imagery always have fancied the like; as when the Nazarene says to those who wished to rebuke the Hosannas of the poor people, "I tell you if these should hold their peace, the stones immediately would cry out." And at his Crucifixion arose stories of the same meaning, like to the ancient myths—the darkness that overspread the land, the

earthquake, the rending of the temple veil, the cleaving of the rocks.

These myths from the childhood of the races carry in their quaint and simple vehicles the thought of the likeness of Nature and the soul. We stand with Nature like parallel mirrors reflecting each other. If a human being were afloat alone in the wide ocean, he would say, "This is I or mine. This beating breast of the deep heaves with feeling like to mine. Its sublimity is its glory in me. I can solve its depths better than my own. In me is the circle of the Nature of all things, as the sea reflects and completes the circle of the sky."

We see that the supreme moral order in which we trust, is repeated in the microcosm of the human soul, whose "moral laws execute themselves," to the producing of life out of good and of death out of evil; and that this moral order in us, like to that around us, we make not, nor can mar by will, nor evade in experience.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### **Review in Brief of Trust in the Soul.**

To state in sum what I have argued of trust in the Universe and trust in our own souls:

We see that these two trusts really are one trust.

This is because—

1.—Since we cannot trust what we have no

reason to think we understand or see rightly, if then we trust the Universe, that it is good, we do so in virtue of trusting our own souls so far as to think we read the Universe and perceive the laws thereof aright.

2. We are part of the Universe and belong to it, not as if by an accident, or as if an excrescence on it, but a germane portion or inclosure of it; wherefore if the Universe be worthy of trust, so must our own souls be:

3. We find in ourselves the same ideas and nature which appear in the sensible forms of creation, and it is plain that we are made of one pattern with the whole.

For which reasons it appears manifest that the true and pure Faith which is trust of the Universe includes by necessity trust in human nature as a spiritual truthful faculty; and again that the latter includes the former. It is not possible that either should be trustworthy unless both be so. For if we conceive the Universe true and good, but human faculty false, this is a foolish confidence, because the true Universe can not report itself to a false faculty. Contrariwise, if we conceive the Universe false and bad, but human faculty truthful, this is unreasonable in another way; for whence then comes the excellence of the faculty?

The Moslems have a legend that when man was made, the Creator sent his four archangels to bring earth for the body of the new being from the sacred soil of Mecca and Medina. When thus

the body was prepared, they say, before God put into it the soul which he had created for it a thousand years before, he commanded the angels to bathe the soul in the sea of glory which proceeded from himself. Thus, saith the legend, both in body and in spirit man is made of holy stuff; as saith the poet, in verse like to the legend,

"Trailing clouds of glory do we come  
From God who is our home."

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## CHAPTER VII.

### Examples.

EXAMPLES of this simple and true Faith are very many in history—many if they be counted, and many more among "obscure martyrs" and lowly folk unnamed and uncounted; and yet so few among the millions of men that the earth everywhere is athirst for simple Faith, and barren while it awaits that rain of soul.

All the great leaders of men in religion, the sacred teachers, have been men of such Faith, and this was all their power: Socrates, Epictetus, Aurelius, Confucius, Buddha, and of the moderns, Luther (albeit with a dwarfing authority and dogmatism besetting him), Blanco White, Theodore Parker, and many of the like though less famous—less famous, but very potent in their places with the riches of their souls. All "this glorious company of apostles," however they differ in the things

they taught, agree in this, that they took the Universe for truth and glory and establishment, and trusted in it, and therewith trusted their own souls and spoke forth from themselves.

Herein, as I must think, lay the might of our beloved Master, the Nazarene. His strength was his simplicity of Faith, his trust in his own soul. So high was this trust and such things he did and said in the courage and might of it, that the world has stood staring at it stupidly, and impiously, I would add, if it were not so abjectly, saying that it was not Nature but Super-nature which appeared in Jesus. Men were confounded because so they were mixed up with outward things, creeds, books, churches, rituals, that they had made no acquaintance with their own souls. When have men wondered as they ought at the mysteries of themselves or stood in awe before their own being? But Jesus did so, as it seems to me; and I must think this is the explanation of him, and a cause sufficient for any wonders or glories whatever. He was a temple unto himself. His own soul was a "holy of holies" unto him; the "Ark of the Covenant" was therein. He simply told what he found in himself, and said this was sufficient for present needs above all "traditions" and "elders" and great patriarchs and teachers of the past—Abraham, Moses, the prophets—as any one may read in the whole burden of the great Mountain Sermon.

I behold Jesus, a man of men, in the vineyard-



slopes and by the waysides and water-shores of Palestine, talking with wine-growers, shepherds and fishermen, or arguing with cunning priests and scribes. The history of the Christian centuries thereafter has been largely (is this too much to say?) the record of a world fermenting with those peasant conversations. What was the power? Said Jesus anything new? I know not of a new word from him, not one, not a saying which I have not read elsewhere, in ethnic Scriptures, in Greek and Roman classics, in the Stoics, the Old Testament, the Talmud. The Beatitudes and the petitions of the Lord's Prayer are in the Psalms, in popular proverbs, in the sayings of Rabbins. This is familiar knowledge; so that I know not why men halt so much from understanding that Jesus said nothing new, but that he was very mighty because *he himself was new*, forever new-born with the moment, offering his own soul instead of traditions; and if *against* traditions, still only the soul, wherein first he listened and then purely told what he heard. He was very quiet, though he could be roused to "moral wrath;" he was no man of action nor leader of party, no organizer. Except for his sublime silence, what would he seem before Pilate more than a helpless victim? But a power from him streams over all men, enlightening us to "know ourselves," because of his pure simplicity of Faith in the Life above things written.

This is the manner of conveyance of *inspiration*

from one soul to another. For a man may transport knowledge to us by telling what he has heard from another, or what he has read in a book; but he can unlock our souls for inspiration and pour strength, hope, ecstasy, life throughout us only by telling us what things he has seen with his own eyes and what voices heard with his ears. This is all the secret of Jesus and of such-like Sons of Man. This made the Mountain Sermon trumpet-toned. He who repeats any thing to us brings us to a place of brands where a fire was; but he who having eyes sees and tells us thereof, puts flame to us with the fire of his spirit.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### **That this View of Faith tests Character.**

FAITH, which is trust in the All, and thereupon trust in one's own soul, tests the quality of a man; for it is not to be had without a simple and high character. To accept some belief from authority, or at least an assent to some belief, and to hold it ignorantly or submissively or superstitiously, asking no question, walled in from doubt—this is a very easy thing. What effort of mind or faithfulness of act or purity of spirit doth it demand? Sometimes indeed it stands in place of all these, hiding from others' eyes, and sometimes, far worse, from a man's own eyes, that he has none of these virtues. The putting on and wearing of a creed

is but an outward conformation, like a garment laid over us; but what the body is under it, the garment declares not. But true Faith tests the very truth of character, and will have goodness, and is not possible otherwise.

For, first, there must be a truthfulness and simplicity and purity in us that we may trust ourselves. Is there a man so lost as to *believe in evil* and trust to it, knowing what it is? Nay, how is this possible in reason? For who can see how then what the man should believe in and trust in could be evil unto him or in his mind?—since it would accord with his nature and befit him.

Secondly, we must be truthful and pure of heart in order to trust the Universe. For as a man is, so seems the world to him. He beholds it with the eyes of a good or a bad spirit, which singles out the things like itself, and indeed colors the whole with the hue of its own nature, so that the world is good or bad as the eye is. The punishment of the wicked and foul is to pour themselves over all things, so that not only they carry hell about in them, but make for themselves the Universe infernal.

Nothing can be more sure than that true Faith is impossible to the untruthful, the indolent, frivolous, selfish, cruel. For the Universe is not like them, and how can they trust and rejoice in what is unlike them? Yet how can they trust to the base and monstrous? And since, so far as a man is bad and deceitful he must know evil, what

it is, yet can not trust his own soul, nor yet the Universe, a lying and uncleanly spirit lives wicked in a seeming-wicked throng, yet condemned to moments of bitter scorn of himself and hatred of the world. This flash of scorn is a lightning-break of the soul's natural trust in the good and the true.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### **That this View of Faith enlarges Character.**

IF a man conceive that he must trust his own soul, and then he be faithful to the light within him and live obediently thereto and nobly, it is plain that he will become more worthy of devout trust in the soul; and if therewith he conceive of the radiant Universe of Order, and trust in it, then it is plain that such a Faith going forth from him, will return back into him and work within him to enlarge all his powers and lift up his whole being. The true Faith nourishes the active and commanding moral qualities. Freedom is begotten in it, and therewith a courage wealthy in industry, discovery, execution. Honesty is a necessity to it. Who can have this Faith, and palter with himself? Out of honesty, freedom, courage, come noble examples of devotion to truth, and of self-sacrifice for it, even unto death.

Surely it is plain that he that hath Faith to ask no more than only to have light, will be as honest

as the light; and he who hath no craving to force his creed on another, will be the more industrious to seek truth and the more single-minded to set it forth, and will have the law of growth in him and be stronger every way; and he who trusts his own soul, will stand religiously to his own sight of truth; and he who trusts the Universe, will be free and daring, and not think to make a business of the *consequences* of dutiful action;—which to do is surely great impiety, for the acting freely and truthfully lies with a man, but the consequences lie in the holy Order which he hath to trust.

I have been used to think it a pathetic instance of lack of the true Faith, that Fra Angelico so was hindered by this lack, as is told of him, and so thwarted in his beautiful art by the effect of a creed replacing Faith. It is said of him that always he invoked divine guidance and blessing before beginning a painting, and on this account after it was finished, no matter what its faults, never could he be induced to alter it in any way, for he thought that to do so would be impiously to amend the heavenly guidance. Now here was a delicate and sad difference between a creed and Faith, between a submission, however lowly and prayerful, and trust in the Universe. For that trust, which is Faith, would have made the Saint free of his own soul, to use all the labors, endeavors and reflections thereof, and brood, try, wait, consider, try again, and give harbor to every thought and light, as he must. Also it is told that he

thought it a sin to behold any part of the human figure; whence he could make no study of its proportions and nobilities, so that he has left us truth of nature in art only by his beautiful and spiritual heads. How much has the world lost belike, because that gentle and lovely soul had not that manner of trust which is Faith! For Faith, the Realization of the Nature of Things, would have shown him that in love of beauty, for his art, and that his forms might be true to nature, the Universe was at his service, and naught could be a bad daring in it to an eye so single, except to dare to keep himself from whatever might inform and glorify his pictures.

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## CHAPTER X.

**That this View of Faith gives great Comfort and Peace.**

THE comfort, sustaining solace, peace, conferred by true Faith, is very great; yet not more than the need. Wherefore it is one of the excellencies of this true Faith, that so richly it supplies so great a need. This will be plain if we consider what doubt is, and how sure that we shall be beset by it. Doubt is a questioning of intellectual conclusions which previously we have come to or have accepted from others. The questioning will besiege sometimes our most serious conclusions, and no credence which we have stopped in at one time can be walled up against the questioning at another

time. Doubts will scale all fortresses, all defences, refuges, sanctuaries. They are like to invade us in any hour of thought, for thought is an opening of gates. They may shock or suspend suddenly our belief in very sacred and long dear sanctions of our religion; they may break our rest and harass us during long and grievous struggles. The only avoidance is by not thinking at all, which is mental and moral death.

Amid these swelling doubts, these tossing, often stormy, seas of intellectual questionings, the comfort of the steadiness of true Faith is past uttering; nay, even it is necessary to the very health and good issue of the doubts and endeavors in the questioning spirit. For by this Faith we know that our doubts are not dangerous, and no ill can happen to us by the honesty of them, however we strive and strain in them. To be whelmed and thrown about in doubts, if all things were only whirlwinds and surges, and naught immovable anywhere, were only misery. But one can stand in peace and look forth serenely on any clouds and storms of doubts, whatever be the roaring and shaking, if he be fixed on a goodness and a truth which is absolute, immutable, turning on a center deeper than doubt, not so much as trembling in any uproar. Now, if what I have argued in Book First be sound, the Faith which is simply trust in the Universe, that the Universe, the Whole, is good, safe, truth-unfolding, right-keeping, not to be thwarted or swerved,—this Faith, to which in

this Book Second I have argued must be added trust in one's own soul, that it is truth-helmed, and to explore may go forth uncertain only of the length of the voyage but sure of a haven at last in whatever is true, which is whatever is best, beautiful, blessed,—this Faith, I say is the immovable unshaking, unquestionable thing on which standing we have a quiet eye and wholesome mind for all doubts. I have met somewhere the thoughtful remark that the essential thing in the Calvinistic dogma of Predestination is absolute assurance of safety—"a thought," says this writer (his good insight I have kept but ungratefully forgotten his name) "which we must try to ground more firmly, but without which it is true that neither peace nor enduring activity is possible." We can have this assurance of safety only when we dwell in this immovable place, this true Faith, where doubts can not hustle and drive us, but only invite us, and open gates of thought.

If I may be allowed a figure here, I am reminded of some words of a poet, the "holy Herbert"—

—A young exhalation, newly waking,  
Scorns his first bed of dirt and means the sky;  
But cooling by the way, grows pursie and slow,  
And settling to a cloud, doth live and die  
In that dark state of tears."

Nay, but the poet errs, or he stops midway, taking but half the truth, for his purpose at the moment. For the precipitate dew neither lives nor dies "in that dark state of tears;" no, but



rises again by nourishing a living root, and now appears in a strong stem of life, foliate and spreading into the air. So if a breath of the soul be swept across by a doubt and settle cloudy, chilled and heavy, if then it fall into the good ground of Faith, as dew or rain into the earth, it will aspire again, successful, in some living manner, as the watery drops come up to be part of a forest in whose tops birds sing into the sky.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### **That We are Compelled to Trust our Own Souls.**

TO PERCEIVE this, that we are *compelled* to trust ourselves, we have only to consider that in searching for truth or in any manner of thinking, we must begin with trust of something. To assume something, or take something for granted, is the first step in thought or comparison or investigation. Now since we must trust something, the only question seems to be whether we will trust *ourselves* or *something outside of us*. But indeed this is a question that only *seems* to be; in very fact there is no such question; and herein comes forth shining plainly the trustworthiness of our mental and moral being. No such choice is allowed us as whether we will trust ourselves or somewhat outside of us. For suppose a man imagine a sacred book, tradition or church to be his ground of belief; whence his trust, as he conceives, is

reposed altogether in this holy authority. Yet there must be reasons why he accepts this book or this church and not some other. If then he consider these reasons and conclude by them, in very fact he trusts himself as essentially as if he should subject the contents of the book or the teachings of the church to his own mind. He may examine with bias, or even foolishly refuse to consider the contents of the book as a part of the evidence touching the claims of it. This, as I have said before, is one of the most strange and mischievous facts in men's thinking of religion, the refusal, I mean, to admit the ethical contents of a book in evidence touching divine claims for it. Notwithstanding, if a man examine any evidence, though external, thereby he trusts himself and seats his reason above authority. For is the validness of the claims of a book or church a less awful topic than doctrines which rest on the validness of the claims?

But suppose a man so venerate the authority of book or church that he will not search into its claims; yet he must examine the ground of the claims to be freed thus from his mind's empire; or if not this, yet the ground of the ground of the claims; and so following, to some stopping place, when patience or dullness has run to its end. Whence it is plain we have no choice whether to trust ourselves or somewhat outside of us, but are compelled to trust our own souls. Let a man be a very idler and examine nothing, yet if he

assent to anything, it is for some reason satisfying to him; and to have a reason, though a contemptible one, is to trust oneself.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### **Objection—That Trust in the Soul Falls Practically.**

THE objection is void of force. Also it arises in part from a dismal fashion of "choosing the bad when the good is by us;" I mean that the objectors see the evils of the world excessively and the virtues of it not enough. But as the objection, though empty and doleful, continually is set forth, I will spend some words on it briefly.

This objection is, that the exercise of human reason has had full course enough and has run into all manner of bad things. War, drunkenness, polygamy, profligacy, murder, robbery, frivolity, every kind of selfishness or vileness, savage or civilized, is set forth to us as fruits of man's unevangelized conscience. Polytheism, atheism, scepticism, all heresies, are called the brood of "man's carnal reason"—for by such a term do these objectors make bold with the human mind if it receive not their book (the gospel, or some other) and be not given wholly over to it to the letter.

Now it is enough to say that there are other facts in the world which only a perverted eye and hard heart (or if not hard, doleful and dispirited) will overlook; nay, I am very sure that a sound eye

and a brave gentle heart will see them first and most. There is deep and true religion in the world, not unknown even to the untaught, nay, even to barbarous peoples. There is very much honesty, kindness, love, nobleness, self-sacrifice, charity, courage, innocence of childhood, deeps of maternal devotion, the prophet's zeal, the martyr's death. These things make the world wealthy in the most noble beauty; and how is it possible it can be reasonable to ascribe *all* the evil to the soul of man and *all* the good to a book or church or somewhat exterior?

Besides, there is progress in the world; there was progress in nations remote from Judaism and ages before Christianity. Now this arose not from the doing of nothing. Mankind has advanced by toil, yes, by very painful labors and struggles; which is to say, by the sturdy exercise of all his strength, bodily, mental, moral, spiritual; which is to say that good came out of the soul in the exercise of itself; for the achievement of progress already was old before any of our sacred books came to sight. The slow forging onward of the world, therefore, is a practical disownment æons-old of the objection that trust of the soul will not work well in practice. In fact—as in the last chapter, if it be sound, I have shown—not only it works and is all indeed that can work in our putting forth to any encounter of mind, but it works so well that, if we scoff at it, we do so under guard of a civil order which it has brought to pass, with

a lusty tongue to whose health it is medicinal, in language which it has reared up and disciplined to beauty, and with a foolish zeal to preserve great spiritual thoughts which never were endangered in the keeping of the soul.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### **That Mental Errors have no Weight against our Spiritual Trustworthiness.**

IN the last chapter I have said very briefly (for I need stop but little over these points) that the bright and happy things of the earth and the multiform good in it and the growth thereof, may be set over against all the evils and miseries which are marshaled to disparage trust in our own souls. But this appears to acknowledge that these same evils *are* facts against the mental and moral trustworthiness of our spiritual being. But this by no means I can allow, but must aver that these ills and errors, so seeming-strong, are in very fact no facts at all against the reasonableness of trusting ourselves.

For why of necessity is an error a dreadful or harmful thing? Why is belief of an untruth fearful or fatal? It is not fatal, nor harmful, nor dreadful, but, on the contrary, necessary. For, as says a Stoic, "Men are not made wise, but have to become so." Since the world was not brought to pass perfect at once, but evolving, it must advance

by the slow rectifying of errors. Meanwhile, those errors must be believed, else there is no exercise of mind in any manner, no sally-port of intelligence, no place where the mind can be steadied and built up for another launch. And no error ever was but had some truth mingled in it. The next error will be improvement on the older and grosser error which nevertheless was not all error; and if the new error, which hath a little more of the truth, be received and valued on that account, it hath an office like to truth unto the sincere believers of it; for the spirit of the holding of it is truth.

The history of science reveals plainly that belief in an error need have no harm in it. Hypotheses formed, accepted, made theory, altered, abandoned, errors both in facts and in explanation, strew thickly the path of Science. Nevertheless, how luminous her path! how beautiful her feet! The world, I am sure, is no worse, nor ever was, for the physics of Aristotle, the Ptolemaic astronomy, or the phlogiston of the old chemists.

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

**That Moral Errors have no Weight against our Spiritual Trustworthiness.**

I NEED spend few words under this thought, for day-light is not clearer. By moral errors I mean ill deeds and bad conduct, or erroneous views and

theories of duty and life, or defective moral judgments springing from immoral or un-moral state of heart. With moral errors, I may include here, for convenience, religious dissents, such as Atheism, Materialism, or anything called heresy (though these fall properly under mental errors) and also an unreligious behavior, indifference, hardihood, irreverence, profaneness. Now, what I have said in the last chapter, of mental errors, though little was needful under that head, applies equally to moral errors, and is sufficient. For why is the moral sphere of life to be exempt from the general order or method, which is the method of imperfect beginnings and progression therefrom onward, that the world may come to estate of virtue? Why should morality be exempt from this universal order?

There are some persons, it is familiar, who claim finality for their little system or creed, and say truth has come to dwell with them in perfectness. These persons generally are ignorant, but sometimes learned; never wise; wisdom is not attained by alphabets or arts. Strange, I think, that these learned creed-compellers collect so little from the instruction of Nature, from the order of evolving things, from the dome of heaven, from fields and woods wealthy with sweet lessons of migratory birds and successive seasons, the seed time, the blade, the harvest, from the arts of the florist, the fruit-grower, the farmer, and the obedient evolution of the plants.

I must keep open ground all around me. Bartol has said, "I will not bind myself to my own words of yesterday, nor beyond the moment can I accept yours"—I give from memory the words, which mean that we should change our thoughts as often as new light may show us a better way, and that no error is a perdition of us or a disproof of the empire of the soul. It is very simple reason that in seeking the *absolute* true and right, we must halt awhile day by day in what is *relative* to our present powers. Nor is this less true of moral knowledge than of scientific or historical.

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## CHAPTER XV.

### **The Mental and Moral States that are Harmful.**

It is possible now that my reader may ask, "What then? Is there nothing hurtful, wholly harmful, harmful in its very self? Nothing to be shunned and spurned utterly by all men? Are all things, even what now we see to be moral abominations, harmless at some time for some men? And if ever so they be, when cease they to be harmless?"

Indeed and sadly there is a bad thing that is wholly bad, never aught but harmful, never useful or fitted to any condition or time of the moral journey of men. But this wholly bad thing is not any outward fact, assent or dissent, or any deeds whatever, but is a state of the soul; not the act done or the creed held, but the spirit of the doing



or the holding. For illustration—charity can not stand in the act of giving alms; for a pompous spirit makes the deed no charity, but ostentation. A caress, in the mere act of it, hath no quality of heart or conscience. It may be described with exact physical notation, like any chemical analysis—a contact of bits of matter shaped into hand or lip or cheek which are carbon, air and water. But the act is a caress when it is truth; it is no caress, being a lie, if it be a flippancy, a flattery, a cunning, the signal of a traitor, the mockery of a libertine. In like manner no outward deed or form or creed is the evil thing but the spirit in which we put these forth or hold them in us. Unearnestness is pure evil. If a man accept or profess anything because he is lazy and only repeats what he has been told, or for ease or ambition, or by lack of any warm moral earnestness, this is pure evil. But not his foolish creed is then the ill thing, but the state of soul that drips it from his tongue thoughtless, not proving it in his heart. To avow anything as creed while indifferent to it as truth—this is utterly evil. I fear very many do this evil thing, taking moral and religious creed from priest or ancestors or custom, and going about their business thereupon very well satisfied and complacent, but knowing no earnestness in their thoughts, no meaning, grandeur, divinity. Yet mayhap there is a deeper dye of evil than even this unearnestness. I know not, for I am ignorant how to measure

the quality of such things; but however, I have met a very odious effrontery, namely, the avowed rejection of thought and of personal answerableness in order to save creed. A friend said to me on one occasion, "I always have avoided carefully all investigation of these matters because I wished to have a firm faith." Marvelous! Faith got by a resolute ignorance! But it is the purpose of this little treatise to show that such a manner of assent and of asserting the assent is not Faith at all, nor truly resembles Faith in the least, however much it usurp that holy and high name. This moral unearnestness as to the truth I must think—and can see no otherwise—pure evil, and directly opposite to Faith. By this men are harmed sadly; not by *believing* any creed, even a foolish one, for *belief* is a hearty thing, but by *assenting* to it in idleness, un-sincere, desiring comfort and salvation more than the truth for its pure beauty; or, to say it otherwise, desiring that this or that be the truth more than to know faithfully what in truth the Truth is.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

**That Failure or Wreck is not possible to a Morally-earnest Spirit.**

THIS is but to say in other words that sincere errors count not against trust in the soul, and is but the converse of what is said in the last chapter,

that, namely, unearnestness about the truth is pure evil. It would seem reasonable thence to think sincere earnestness and lowly inquiry a pure good against which nothing can avail to do harm. The one fact that truth is loved, sought patiently, carefully, reverently, confused with no other claim, nay, beheld to include all concerns of men, this arrays the soul, this forges for us a complete mail, this hedges the devoutly truthful spirit about with such divinity that all things conspire for it. The soul then asks the one pure question belonging to the soul, namely, "What is true and right?" Which is to say, *the moral center is sound*; and this, like a healthy heart, shoots life through the whole being, so that no sincere and lowly-inquiring error can be a spiritual destruction.

It is worthy of remark that the case is very different with men's blunders in physical knowledge. These errors constantly are made, yet still men go to work again with their stock of skill, invention, quickness. Errors in science are not deemed proofs of scientific untrustworthiness in the mind. Nevertheless, they may be fatal, involve a man in bodily ruin, overthrow him in bankruptcy, crush him in the fall of a house ill built or in the explosion of machinery ill handled; make conflagration of his possessions, poison him when he thought to be cured. But to the simple, truth-loving and lowly-inquiring spirit every error of understanding hath the virtue of obedience to inward dictates and love of truth. It is like to be a

step up from some grosser error; in the joy of which ascent, the freedom of the air, wider view, intimation of glories beyond, such an error may be a prospect-place in a heavenly journey, a "Pisgah-Sight of Palestine."

This blessedness of our freedom, that no wreck is possible to a morally-earnest soul, hath two sanctions. One is the mystical conspiring together of all things for good to such a spirit, as Paul said; and in Job, "Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field, and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee." It is very wonderful and joyful to observe how every particular thing on the earth seems to arise and stand up about the truthful man, and bring him to understanding and to safety. "To safety?" saith the reader. Yes; and so saith the psalmist, "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil." "But what? Doth not the martyr burn?" But the psalmist adds instantly the manner of preservation; he follows with, "He shall preserve thy soul." If the spirit be preserved a-light in us, 'tis but menial to complain that some of the ways of God "triumph at our cost" awhile. Moreover, even outwardly truthfulness is safety; for it lifts up the present like a peak that draws the lightning of the future harmlessly. If a man be simple of heart and truthful, things to come must agree with what he has said this day, with what he has done, and with what he is. It is not possible that in any way the event should confound him.

The other sanction is that Nature must appear to us with a color and form like to ourselves. For out of the abundance of the heart the eye seeth, which is the reason that out of the same abundance the mouth speaketh, for we can speak nothing else but what we see. As Emerson says that wherever we may go we must carry beauty with us or we shall find none of it, so, conversely, if we carry it we shall find it abundantly; for beauty and salvation will run out from their secret tabernacles everywhere to mate with what is in us. Though this book be one of reasoning, I will ask leave to transcribe here a song with this thought in it; indeed often song is the best philosophy:

#### THE CHAMELEON.

The tyrant Zouf  
Threw young Mahroof  
In prison, because he won with love  
The gentle Hulveh, brave and fair above  
All the Damascus girls; on whom bold Zouf  
Had turned his face.  
Hulveh's father, Jaafar, sought a wild place—  
'Tis only youth in grief loves company—  
To be alone, and sorrow to the sky.  
Anon he saw a lizard on a green  
Leafy plant; the creature with like sheen  
Was colored: soon it crept forth nigh  
Upon the tawny sand, and tawny became:  
Anon a gray tree-stem it climbed; the same  
Befell—sweet stratagem,  
The saurian took the pearl-gray of the stem.  
"Ah!" Jaafar said, "the creature wears the shade  
Of any thing whereon his foot is stayed:

Would Nature knew a converse plan,  
To take her hues from soul of man!"  
With this, Jaafar felt on shoulder  
A touch, and looked; 'twas Zouf, leering bolder  
Than wont, with hateful triumph and stare.  
An instant stroke  
Of blindness fell like smoke  
Over Jaafar; the sky grew spare;  
The sun was gloom; to ground  
The very air fell and clave; the sand darkened and frowned.  
Zouf went; when then round Jaafar's neck was flung  
An arm, and in his ear was sung  
The manly music of the tongue  
Of brave Mahroof; and "Come," said he,  
"Up! Fly with us! Be free!  
Our Hulveh found her way to me,  
And brought a blade  
With which my bonds in bits she laid:  
She waiteth yonder, under the thicket-brush,  
With horses held a-hush!"  
While Mahroof spake,  
An instant break  
Of splendor fell on Jaafar; the air was bright;  
The sun burned,  
The sand turned  
Yellow as gold,  
And was like water with the light.  
Jaafar fell down and cried,  
"Allah, forgive my pride:  
Now I behold  
That Nature's part  
Its colors taketh from man's heart."  
Quick they are at Hulveh's hand,  
Where she waited—lovely sight!  
Then away, over the sand  
That is a yellow mere with light.

So burns all Nature to the simple, sincere, light-loving spirit; so shineth back all Nature to the forth-shining of the light within; and though there be many erroneous paths in which the honest friends, Ignorance and Inquiry, may run astray, not one of them leadeth to a black night nor to snares nor to any hideousness under the countenance of Creation.

# BOOK THIRD.

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## CHAPTER I.

### Transition to Thought of God.

LET me state how far now we have come and what has been done up to this point:

Book First, if it be reasoned correctly, has established that Faith is trust in the Universe as Moral Order.

Book Second, if it be argued soundly, has shown Faith to include by necessity trust in our own souls, that we "gravitate to truth" by nature; nay, and contain in us a cosmic order complete of our own, wherein every act is judged on the moment, and no man does evil but instantly he is degraded, and no man does good but instantly he is ennobled.

The Second Book led from the Universe to ourselves; now this Third Book entereth into that deep of us where the greatest of all thoughts inhabits.

Sir Thomas Browne, in "*Religio Medici*," says, "The earth is a point not only in respect of the heavens above us, but of that heavenly and celestial part within us. That mass of flesh that



circumscribes me limits not my mind. That surface that tells the heavens it hath an end can not persuade me that I have any. I take my circle to be above three hundred and sixty. Though the number of the arc do measure my body, it comprehendeth not my mind. Whilst I study to find how I am a microcosm, or little world, I find myself something more than the great. There is surely a piece of divinity in us; something that was before the elements and owes no homage unto the sun. Nature tells me I am the image of God as well as Scripture. He that understands not thus much hath not his introduction or first lesson, and is yet to begin the alphabet of man."

In this passage the eloquent Sir Thomas, beginning with himself, ends with divinity. "Nature tells me," says he, "I am the image of God." Thither now, in ending account of the true doctrine of Faith, what purely and truly it is, we must go, even unto thinking of God and the uttering of the Eternal Name. We come now to this inquiry, namely, What Faith hath to say to us, and how it will lead and instruct us, in thinking of God.

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## CHAPTER II.

### **Why I have not Defined Faith as Trust in God.**

THIS question once was asked me by a friend who had listened to me while I discoursed some thoughts of Faith. What was a question in one mind may

arise belike in others. Therefore it seems fitting to say here why I have not defined Faith immediately as trust in God instead of trust in the Universe.

I could not do so because the thought of God hath had no meaning or validness to some minds. The being of God hath been denied by some persons and doubted by many; yet I never could think those persons to be in such case toward knowledge of God as blind mutes are in toward Nature. Here I must refer the reader to Chapter X. of Book First, in which I have said why, as I think, there is no room for us to turn doubters of the Universe and no sane whole mind can do so. Yet I dare not say the like of doubting the being of God, lest I savor of offence and dogmatism, from which even the greatness and glory of the thought in question will not save me. And yet continually in this little book I have argued that Faith must be beyond all doubt and therefore the object of Faith must be so. Hence I could not confine Faith to be described as trust in God, because the Eternal Name hath been doubted very seriously and reverently.

Moreover (although this belike is but saying the same thing in another way), I have argued that Faith can not be belief in any one or another creed or any article thereof, even the most intense belief, or most calm and most well-thought, or however virtuous in any manner. Rather is Faith not the belief, but the love and

emotion, the quietness and carefulness, or whatever other virtue, in which the belief is held; and these virtues of the believing which mark the Faith mingled therewith, might be transferred to any other belief, even to the very opposite conclusion. This is but the same as to say, as before herein I have reasoned, that true Faith is known by a very vast sober freedom to doubt and question anything, or hold anything poised in thought, except its own one necessary object, which is the Universe as Moral Order, in which Moral Order lies the safety and sober virtue of all doubting, questioning, reasoning. I know not now, nor ever could see, why belief in God, though it be so solemn, mighty, joyful and precious a belief, should be excepted from this freedom of pure Faith, or advanced differently toward Faith from any other belief, or put into the definition of Faith as above question of men in place of that one object of Faith, the Universe, which to question were self-destruction of Faith, which to trust is the ground of questioning all else whatsoever.

Therefore I can give no such account of Faith as would deny it to an honest Atheist. Nay, it hath seemed to me that a man who earnestly and in simple trust in truth should come calmly to such a momentous questioning or denial, might deserve above all to be called a man of Faith. Indeed it hath been my lot (and there must be many who have the same to say) to know intimately and dearly such a man, and truly I thought I

never met one in whom Faith had wrought more deeply. "I want the truth," cried he, "and this only is my glory, that in the name of truth I dare any doubting, and yet have in me a great peace." Surely such spirits are possible, and their daring is but the white flash of the cap of a wave swimming on unmoving deeps of Faith.

I have read in a philosopher's book,\* "Atheism is a crime, rather than a mere intellectual error." I am very sorry for the philosopher. Yet I may owe him somewhat if he make me reflect once more how much better to be atheist by honesty and struggle than theist by accident and indolence.

Therefore I say I could not define Faith as belief in God, nor deny it to one who in trust of the Universe—which is to say, of the virtue of Reason, or of the security and living power of Truth, or of the Nature of Things to bring the truth to pass—should question concerning the being of God, or ask the meaning of the Eternal Name, or halt in believing. And although humbly I may dare, knowing well it *is* a daring, to call myself a believer in God, yet truly I have met no prayer more sacred to me, nor more touching, nor more like to be made my own at moments, than the cry, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Mayhap he who most often lifts up that cry is he who thinks most, labors most, loves, trusts, lives most. In truth, when faithfully, fervently,

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\* Dr. McCosh.

purely, knowing of no convoy but honesty, and asking none, the soul doth unroll serious questioning before the being and abode of God, there is then a fulness of truthfulness which is like unto God—I had almost said, which proveth Divinity by the sincere virtue of the questioning thereof.

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### CHAPTER III.

**Now We are to apply the True View of Faith to the Thought of God.**

BLEST is anyone who sees in all earth's forms, vast or minute, the "unambiguous footsteps" of God. Better still is the Zoroastrian Scripture, "Him whom I wish to exalt with my praise I now *see with my eye and hear with my ear*, knowing him to be God, the reality of the good mind, the good deed, the good word." And I like much the story of Jacob's wrestling, and his naming the place Peniel,\* which is to say, the Face of God, for that, said he, "I have seen God face to face." What is said so much in the Scripture, "The light of His countenance," and the benediction, "The Lord lift up his countenance upon you," exalt me exceedingly, they being, like to the Zoroastrian words, expression of the visibleness of the countenance of God; nor would I take otherwise than in very plain sense and in the simple meaning of the

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\* Gen. XXXII., 30.

words the Master's saying that the pure in heart *shall see God*.

In Chapter V. of Book Second I have reasoned that our spiritual being corresponds to Nature, so that without and around us as in us the same thoughts shine, and Nature is reflected in us, and we again are reflected or reported back to ourselves in Nature, and we behold our most deep sacred thoughts or aspirations continually coming forth to be known and grow beautiful in the many forms of the outward; nor is there anything which the outward seems to be purposing and drawing unto which we pronounce not beautiful and good. I know not what to conclude from this observation but that the soul and Nature are at one thus because both are of ONE and in ONE, in THE ONE, the Infinite and Eternal, in whom live and move the mutable forms of the immutable Order!

Now by whatever way this thought, the One, the Everlasting Name, God, the Lord, hath come or grown up in us—which I inquire not now—having it, we have to try what effect on our thought of God hath the doctrine of Faith herein offered. Doth this doctrine of Faith make our thought of God more near, personal, rejoicing, or contrariwise, absent, distant, mediate? Lower or higher? Eternal Life and Presence in Order and Law which are his Being appearing unto us, or contrariwise, an absentee Legislator, planning the task of the salvation of men? The answer to these questions I will try now to set forth, premising

that I must offer first some explications and definitions technical and abstract. For as I have defined Faith to be trust in the Universe as Moral Order, I can not discover the relations of Faith to the thought of God without first coming to a perfect and clear notion of the meaning of Order.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### Three Emphases in the One Fact.

THERE are three familiar terms which are "household words in the vocabulary of philosophy," of science, of theology. These are, **ORDER, LAW, UNITY**. Another manner of expression or synonym for Unity is **THE ONE IN THE MANY**. First the meanings of the words and then the relations between them must be understood before one step onward from this point can be taken by us. It is my aim now, in order that I may advance to my end, to say, and to show, if I reason well, that these three terms all have one meaning, whereby they imply and express each other; yet that they are not therein merely synonyms having no more than a rhetorical usefulness, to be interchanged one with another, for the grace of speech; but that each one of these terms emphasizes a particular aspect of the one supreme thing which they all express. For this purpose I will go on now to take them up in succession, giving first the meaning of each one, then their inter-relations, and

finally the special emphasis of each one. Again I will ask my reader to be patient with unavoidable technical language, and to go on with me, for it is certain, if I shall succeed in the reasoning, that the fruit will repay the attention and time.

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## CHAPTER V.

### First:—Of Order.

IN the reasoning and explication of the notion of Order, it will be easier and plainer to set forth with an order at rest, wherein objects are fixed, moving not.

Conceive, now, a number of similar objects turned out of a vessel upon a table and allowed to remain in such positions as they fall in. The positions in which severally they come to rest, taken together, make a shape or form. But no one will call such a mere chance-shape or fortuitous form *order*. Alter thereupon the positions of the objects so as to make a shape or form *which expresses something*; for example, a straight line, a symmetrical curve having co-ordinates and equation, a square, rhomb, triangle, a letter of the alphabet. Instantly we shall say that now the objects are disposed in an order. Here it is plain, in the case of objects at rest, that Order is Shape or Form *plus* Meaning. Let us call such an arrangement of objects at rest a Statical Order.

Conceive now that the objects on the table



begin to move about, combining themselves in new and varying forms. It is plain that statical position or shape or form has given place to *action*; and the *meaning* of action is its *purpose*. Therefore the definition of Order in the case of objects in motion is Motion or Action *plus* Purpose. This is expressed by one word, namely, Method. Let us call such order Dynamical Order.

But a Dynamical Order is unchangeable, invariable, and therefore is to be defined as *Uniformity of Method*. This truth appears thus: A Statical Order, being at rest, obviously continues identical; which is to say, expresses always the same meaning by the same form. Now this identity of form in the Statical Order appears as uniformity or invariableness of the manner of the action if the Order be Dynamical. For the Dynamical Order, in pursuing or bringing to pass the purpose thereof by changes, with every change will produce a new shape or form; but this form must express in some manner the purpose or end of the Dynamical Order which is pursued by means of the successive forms. These forms manifestly, therefore, will be Statical Orders expressive in some manner of the purpose of the Dynamical Order. Therefore, whatever may be the complete end or purpose of the Dynamical Order, its proximate end is the production of a series of Statical Orders of which each one in some degree is expressive of the complete end. But now, having such a series, we have only *orders*, but no ORDER unless the succession

itself be Order, which is to say, one constant motion or progression in an invariable way. For if the manner vary by chance, there is no order; and if it vary by the evolution of a still deeper manner, then that primary deeper manner is the invariable Order. Therefore, a Dynamical Order is, *as such and of necessity*, one and invariable in the manner of the action. If we attempt to conceive it varying in the action or motion that makes for the purpose, we have then only a series of Orders, but not Order, which is to say, a number of significant Statical Forms, but not a Dynamical Unity. But the conception is impossible.

But again, it is plain, touching the two terms which define Dynamical Order, namely, Motion and Purpose, that the manner of the Motion only can vary alone. For the Purpose obviously must remain the same as long as the Manner of Motion thereunto changes not. But also the Purpose may continue unaltered even if the mode of Action do change; for conceivably there may be many ways to one end. Therefore an Order which is one and invariable is so by unchangeableness of its action. Thus as the Statical Order, not moving, is identity of Form, as is plain to observation and merely giving two names to the same thing, so Dynamical Order, in moving, is uniformity of the manner of motion, as is obvious to reflection and also to be observed sensibly.

To state in brief the result of these definitions, if they be reasoned correctly: Order is of two

kinds—1. Statical; 2. Dynamical; Statical Order is Significant Form and Dynamical Order is Uniform Action unto Purpose. But Action *plus* Purpose is expressed in one word, Method. Thus Dynamical Order is Uniform Method.

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## CHAPTER VI.

### Secondly:—Of Law.

I HAVE said, in ending the last chapter, that Uniformity of Method is obvious to reflection as the definition of Order, and *also may be observed sensibly*. From this remark, namely, that we may perceive sensibly the fact and conditions of Order, we come straightway and reasonably to the notion of Law; for what we have now to undertake is no more than a comparison of observations and a classing of resemblances.

Here I must ask favor of the reader in advance to treat this point, although as briefly as I can, yet with much simplification, even perhaps unto elementariness. For I have found that the notion of Law, although the word is familiar to all ears, not yet has become *intimately* an acquaintance of all minds, and it is better I should be more explanatory than is needful for some readers than not enough for the advantage possibly of others; for neither in this little treatise can we go on a step from this point, nor in any study of religion can

we go far, without a very clear and explicit notion of Law.\*

In defining Order we began with a number of objects and observed their relative positions. In attaining to the idea of Law we begin with close observation of an individual thing.

Conceive a stone thrown into the air and its flight watched attentively till it reach the ground. It is moved in a curve. Conceive that a man cunning in calculation observes the path of the stone from the hand to the earth and is able to compute its elements and to draw on paper the curve thereof. Let him do the same with many different instances of hurled stones. When he shall have computed and drawn the paths of the many missiles, let him compare them together carefully. Thereupon he will discover two things which equally are plain: first, that the path of each missile differs from every other one in sundry ways; secondly, that all the paths or curves are alike in an invariable manner wherein they have a common character, and each is capable of passing into any other by insensible gradations; whereby it is plain that all are different forms of the same thing. This identity or common nature in all the curves then forthwith is stated in terms and may be called the Law of flying stones.

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\* For example, I have heard a Professor in a Divinity School, discoursing to the students on "Miracles," aver that "a man violates the law of gravitation every time he tosses a ball into the air;" therefore, why not miracles? If such things can occur in Academic chairs, there is reason for a more particular and more energetic expounding of Law than can be possible in a brief chapter.

Conceive now that the observer and computer suspects that other missiles, also bodies not thrown but simply let fall, may follow like paths with the hurled stones. Thereupon he turns his attention to the path of a cannon ball, and of a body dropped from a high tower. Forthwith he will find, as he forethought, that the ball and the falling body move in paths like the curves followed by the stones thrown from the hand; that is, having a fixed common nature with all the paths of the hurled stones. This identity or common nature thereupon no longer is confined to the stones, but is extended forthwith, and known as the Law of projectiles and falling bodies.

Conceive again that the observer bethinks him of the moving heavens. He is seized with the thought that the revolving planets may move in orbits which are like the paths of projectiles on the earth. Unto the sky he turns his observation by means of a lens. Soon he has the rapture and exultation of finding Uranus and Saturn, and all of them from the sun out, and all the moons of them, rolling in orbits which have the same common nature that unites the paths of all objects thrown or falling on the earth's surface. The fiery comets too, rushing hither, and anon sweeping off into infinite space, and the meteorites cleaving the earth's atmosphere,—all he finds to be moving in the self-same curves. The observer then in these identities beholds with emotion the Order of the Heavens and hath a hearing of the "Music of the

Spheres." The "fiery oes" of the skies are but vast projectiles; the bit of substance hurled on the earth, or the falling rain-drop, is a little star. There is no confusion in the majesty. The ball flung aimlessly from a babe's hand is cosmical, of the Order of the Heavens. Hereupon the law, first extended from hurled stones to projectiles and falling bodies, again is enlarged to embrace the heavenly spheres.

Conceive now again that the observer bethinks him that all the motions whereof he has studied are surely but effects, which is to say, visible or tangible things whereof the invisible intangible support or impulse is Force. The observer computes again and discovers that the paths of all moving bodies, sidereal or earthly, appear as if the bodies moved under an attraction of every one for every other with force directly proportional to the mass and inversely proportional to the square of the distance; which is to say, if a body be doubled in mass the attraction which in appearance it exerts will have double the pull; but if the body be removed to twice the distance, there will be exerted but a quarter of the pull. This is the Law of Gravitation, to which thus the observing reasoner has come, starting from the movement of a missile dispatched from the hand.

For further expression of the notion of Law, let the reader turn with me from the mechanical motions of masses to those vital motions which we call growth. Conceive a plant examined carefully,

and all its characteristics enumerated; then soon another plant is observed in like manner, and soon several; then the enumerations of the traits of the several plants are compared, and thereupon found to agree exactly in many notable points. These several plants thereupon are classed together and given a common name as a *species*, and all the traits which constantly they have in common are called the *marks* of the species.

Conceive now that many plants have been examined in this manner and many species have been formed. Conceive that then all the species are compared together by means of the several enumerations of their marks, and that thereupon it is discovered that some of the marks of one of the species exist among the marks of sundry other species. Thereupon the species which have these marks in common are classed together in a group of species called a *genus*, and the marks common to them are called the marks of the genus. These marks may be many, but never so many as the marks of any species of that genus, because each species has all the marks of the genus and its own specific marks besides.

Conceive again that in this manner many genera are formed as the many species were, and that, being compared, as previously the species were compared, it is found that sundry genera have notable and constantly prevailing marks in common. Thereupon, as before was done with the species, these genera are classed together in a

group of genera called an *order* or *family*, and the marks common to all these genera are called the marks of the order or family. These marks may be many, but never so many as the marks of any genus of the order.

Conceive again that by a like process many orders or families of plants are formed, and that these, being compared, display certain marks in common, which set off the objects, namely, plants, from all other kinds of objects. Thereupon all the orders or families are grouped together and called the *vegetable kingdom*, and the marks common to all the orders are called the marks of the vegetable kingdom. Whether these marks be more or less in number, they never can be so many as the marks of any order in the kingdom.

With these conceptions we are ready again to embrace the notion of Law. The marks thus assembled are called the Law of vegetable life, the Law according to which a plant contains the marks which embrace it in a certain company of individuals called a species, in a certain collection of species called a genus, in a certain group of genera called an order or family, and in a certain assemblage of orders called the vegetable kingdom.

A precisely like process with other living creatures conducts us from the individual through the species, the genus, the order, to the animal kingdom.

Now from the foregoing examples, let us obtain and state in a general term the notion of



**Law.** It is obvious, in the first place, that Law is a method—a method according to which action or change or growth occurs. But again it is plain that Law can not be discovered until many individuals have been examined. A single missile or plant or animal conveys to us no more than the exceeding number of marks which describe that one case or creature. But when two have been observed and we have noted resemblance or common nature, and finally multitudes have been examined with like result, then we have attained to the perception of a *uniformity of method*, or an *established type*, according to which the motion or the growth proceeds. This is the notion of Law.

Now, as thus I have defined Law as Uniformity of Method, it may be asked whether the Uniformity be absolute, like a mould of cast steel, without possibility of deviation. By no means is it so. Variation appears as plainly to observation as Uniformity appears. I know not how the earth or the heavens can be brought into the chambers of conception unless led by these two principles together, namely, Uniformity and Variation. But now it may be inquired in what manner we are to conceive of the likelihood of Variation; and especially as to any one case which is put forward by report, or even apparently by our own senses, to be a deviation from an observed Uniformity, in what manner we may weigh how likely the deviation is, whether the report may be credited reason-

ably, in due presumption, and our senses stand fair to be playing no tricks with us.

In answer to this inquiry: It is to be noted carefully that the likelihood of variation from observed Uniformity or Law turns on two points: 1.—On the number of individuals examined for the extraction of the marks constituting the common nature which is the Uniformity or Law: 2.—On the number of those marks. The larger the number of the individuals examined, which is to say, in the language of the schools, the wider the *induction*, the more firm is the basis of the common nature, the less likely is variation, and the more reasonably we may be persuaded of an undeviating unalterable Uniformity. Also, very plainly, in measure as the marks constituting the common nature are few, the smaller is the room for deviation from them. Thus the ground of assurance for us as to unvarying stability in an observed Uniformity, examination of many individuals in respect of their agreement in a few marks. The Uniformity or Law which attains the extreme of trustworthiness, that it will not shake or vary, is that wherein the most numerous individuals have been examined in respect of the fewest marks. Now, this point is attained in measure as we ascend the grades of classification. To give example: When to hand-missiles are added powder-projectiles, and to both these again falling objects, and to all these again the heavenly bodies, the number of individuals is increased unimaginably,

and the resemblances between their conditions or manners of motion exceedingly lessened; whereby whatever Law or Uniformity is made out in their motions is the fruit of examining a vast multitude of individuals for very few marks in common; wherein as the individuals are very many, the Law is very general, and as the marks are very few, it is very simple and has few elements that might vary; wherefore the Law is very firm and not easily to be conceived to suffer any shaking or deviation. In like manner, a species of plant circumscribes only the few individuals of that one species, and they have many marks in common; but the genus comprises the individuals of many species, and they have fewer marks in common; the family or order includes the individuals of all the genera while they have still fewer common marks; after which the kingdom embraces the individuals of all the families, and they have the fewest marks in common, no more indeed than such as show the individual to be a plant; wherein again as the individuals are so vastly numerous and the marks required so few, the Law or Uniformity which lies in those marks is a very simple structure on a very wide base, not easily to be overthrown. Thus Law, very plainly, gathers consistency and stableness as it widens in the ascending grades of classification. Beginning with the individual, no higher term is found than what is *usual*, since all the marks *uniformly* present in the individuals are combined to describe the species.

Thence proceeding, the Uniformity which first is attained to in the marks of the species is more assured at every step, till in those few marks which appear in all the individuals of all the species of all the genera of all the families of the whole kingdom, the Law attains unto a very unquestionable firmness, even a majesty, and hardly is conceivable as variable in any manner, but appears a portion or sight of the very supremacy of the heavens and the earth in the heavens.

Here then, if our progress in this long chapter has been right and reasonable, we may rest securely in this definition of Law, that it is Uniformity of Method.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### **That Law and Order are One.**

BEHOLD now before us these two conceptions, Order, Law. We have been dealing with some of the most beautiful and blissful apprehensions of reason; in which happiness we have now to take this one step further, namely, to see that Order and Law are One. But we have no need of argument to do this. It needs but to recall what was reasoned of Order in Chapter V., which came out to this, that Order is Uniform Method. But in reasoning of Law, we have come to the same expression or definition. Therefore it needs but to have the two thoughts, Order and Law, in the

mind together to see directly that they are one. The notion of Law comes of beginning with the individual and climbing therefrom to a vast general conception through the ascensions of classification. The notion of Order begins with the sum and assemblage of things, therefrom traveling in reverse the journey which Law has come, discovering in all portions the Symmetry, Purpose, Method of the whole, conceiving that all parts and agencies of the assemblage are meaning-full and purpose-full, which is the very notion of Order, and act or mingle among themselves to one end which varies not by one manner which deviates not. The notion of Law is a vast unity or common term unfolded from individuals; but the notion of Order is the assembling and companying of the individuals in that unity. Thus these two conceptions traverse the whole concourse of things conversely, but, from whatever side beginning, each covers the whole, like one arch of one doorway seen from east or west. The concord of them in the one definition or term Uniformity of Method, is the school-language for the sublimity of Creation.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### **Thirdly:—Of Unity.**

FROM the notions of Order and of Law the road is short, and but few vehicles of words needed, unto the notion of Unity; to which now we turn.

When we look abroad over things and creatures, the first view of them arrests us with their numerosity. On every side they multiply, and not only is there a host of things but the kinds and appearances of them seem as vast a concourse as the individuals. We are overwhelmed with divergencies, differences, varieties. But very soon, as already explained under the notion of Law (Chapter VI.), we discover these differences, in by far the greater multitude of them, a superabundance indeed so exceeding that all the differences beside these make no more than a handful, and in number count as little as in meaning and embrace they excel, all of which fact hath been opened already under the notion of Law—we discover these multitudinous differences, I say, to be the traits which mark off things as individuals. Under them abides a common nature which allies the individuals. This is *Unity*, in which the multiplicity is embraced or sunk like innumerable objects in one sea. The motions of a hand-missile and of a cannon-ball and of falling objects and of the heavenly bodies seem very diverse, and truly they are so, and the variety of them is infinite; yet the paths of all of them agree in a general term or statement which is one thing constant in all the many paths, whereby each path is more profoundly like to all than it differs from any, and there is a Unity in them as admirable and wonderful and apparent as their variety. In like manner in plants and all living creatures, what is more

amazing than the individuals in their variety? Is anything more amazing? I know not. If anything can be said to be more amazing than another, then mayhap the little group of marks that perseveres, varying not, through a host of individuals, is more astonishing and grand than the numerosity of differences. This perseverance of one group of marks through a host of differing things is their **UNITY**. It brings all the things into a oneness or pervasion of a Common Nature or Being which is the immovable Stem of Life wherefrom all their differences foliate. Or by another figure I may say this Unity in a host is like a scroll precious with great lore or like a sculpture mighty of feature set around with a golden frame of a surprising and beautiful variety of design.

It is easy to see that the greater and more exuberant the multiplicity of things, the more impressive and glorious is the simplicity and agreement of them in one another, I mean the Unity which thus we attain to in them by the transcendence of one term which convokes them all. If the things be very many, and very different in kind, which agree together in a common nature, then the Unity of them will be very rich to the mind, a glorious and great comprehension; it will be to the mind's eye an intellectual beauty and harmony, and a delight thereby, which may be likened to the ecstasy of the ear under impression of the concord of a great assembly of voices and numerous varied instruments in a vast tone and concerted music.

In all the innumerable things, verily in every one of the many of them, is real the one living form, one thought, one nature which collects them into Unity; whence this Unity, as before herein hath been said, hath received another title or expression, namely, **THE ONE IN THE MANY**. I know not whether any human thought be more exalting than this one.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### **That Law, Order and Unity are One.**

As in discerning that Law and Order are one (Chapter VII.), so in knowing that they two with Unity are one no argument is needful. We have but to bring the three thoughts, Law, Order, Unity, into contemplation together to see directly that they are one. This is very plain and even shines with a light if we use the exalting expression of Unity, that it is **The One in the Many**. We have beheld (Chapter V.) that Order is the *one* meaning *in the many* parts of a form, or the *one* purpose *in the many* motions of a living enginery or organism. We have found (Chapter VI.) that Law is the *one* Common Nature, Being, Method, prevailing *in the many* differences of species, genera, and other wider groups, unto the attaining of the embracement of many kinds and innumerable things in one term. Again, Order and Law have been brought to one in the simple expression **Uniformity of**



Method (Chapter VII.); which is no other than the *one method in the many* motions and multiple performances of Nature. Whence in the simple terms of Order and Law appears The One in the Many; nay, Order and Law can not be expressed most simply without these very words (and in the same sequence) that utter the great conception of Unity. Thus all these three names agree in the same wide thought, and are at one, even in the very words of them.

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## CHAPTER X.

### **The Emphasis of Each of these Three Terms.**

IF now, reasoning well, I have brought the three conceptions Law, Order, Unity into one, showing that in truth they are but one thought, to the reader's content, it remains to do what besides I set out for (Chapter IV.), namely, to observe that each of the terms has a special emphasis of its own. For though they all concur in naming one Fact, yet the Fact is one of many aspects to the mind, being no less than Nature itself; and each term bears mainly on one aspect of the indivisible Fact.

Here then stand Law, Order, and The One in the Many, each term including and expressing the others, each one the last up-reach and glory of human knowledge, whereto every atom of versatile Creation witnesses, yet each one having a peculiar

force of its own. This needs no more words in this place than will serve simply to review, side by side in a sentence, what hath been said of each of these terms in the defining of them; thus:

Order emphasizes the FORM, the Collective Spectacle of Things.

Law lays stress on the METHOD, the Individual Conformity of Things.

Unity brings these two emphases together, compounding the Collective Symmetry with the Individual Action, beholding thus the Whole in the Part or The One in the Many; which is to say, the emphasis of Unity is on the Import of Things.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### **That this View of Faith Glorifies Nature.**

If my reader have delayed with me not all willingly in the definitions to this point, let me plead that the conceptions in themselves are grand, that I often have found them, namely, Law, Order, Unity, understood but slenderly, and finally that now I may leave them and come forth as it were from the forest margin which they resemble, into a broad and sunlit space of our subject. We have now to observe what a glory is poured over the earth and the heavens by our doctrine of Faith.

Regarding the outward Creation, wherein our senses have object and delight, Law, Order and The One in the Many mean this, namely, that all

the motions or agencies in Nature go on continually in one unvarying manner, according to a uniform and supreme method; whereof aught of swerving, violation, suspension, is inconceivable and incredible. This is what is meant by the absolute rule of Law, which modern Science hath conceived and reasoned unto plain sight; Law, which instantly, when it is understood, at one blow does away all miracles, "wonders and signs," portents, magic. These things go down, not with any fright to us, if we understand, nor in any storm and stress of controversy, but like an open-seamed or punctured vessel in a calm, swallowed up in inviolable, peaceful Order.

And a great burden of them there was, and even yet is, for the sea to draw down into itself. From the first stepping forth of young Christianity to this hour when surely it may be called old, miracles and portents, "signs," spells, witcheries, every manner of in-break of the supernatural from above and from below, have been told and accepted without end. It is familiar knowledge that the middle ages breathed a saturation of this manner of viewing the world. Any stray bone, if once it were whispered that it might be a relic of some saint, worked miracles abundantly. So many bones of St. Stephen were extant that it was a question what manner of giant could have contained them. This was too much even for that time and belief, so that a proverb arose, "Whoever pretends to have read all the miracles of St. Stephen, he

lies." The world was as full of necromancy, and supernaturalism as when the Grecian deities feasted on Olympus and every tree or brook held a nymph, or as when Jehovah swarmed Egypt with flies and frogs, divided a sea for a chosen people and led them by pillars of cloud and fire, or as when the same fiery race could not content them with the simple moral grandeur and religious beauty of the Man of Nazareth, but robed him with a miraculous birth, a transfiguration, a resurrection and all the array of wonder-stories. Although, as I have said, very much of this miracle-mongering still abides, yet in this day of "the latter rain," the earth hath attained some portion of a better harvest of thought. When a pestilence has invaded a continent we have beheld a bishop of the Roman Church issue an epistle to his people charging them to resist disease by cleanliness and thrift. A mediæval bishop would have read mass against the plague, or the Church would have launched anathema on it; as it is told that a certain Saint, being troubled while preaching with an immense swarm of flies in the church, suddenly raised his arm and cried out "*excommunico eas*," and the hapless insects forthwith fell dead to the floor.

These stories have an affecting simplicity. I quarrel not with them in their place, nor in the least deride them; nay, but delight in them, because they wrap infant religion in many-colored robes, woven, if I may use the figure, in one piece from the mind, seamless. They belong in the

childhood of races, just as fairies, brownies, pixies, kobolds, trolls, and all the rest of the story-folk inhabit a child's world. But soon even the children grow into so much understanding of the sweet serene Order around them that they partake of the dainty legends in happy fancy but no longer in sober belief. Along such a course the whole race travels, and surely ought to have come to a like end now wherever education hath prevailed and good books have come to that point that almost they drop from wayside stalls for a penny and any man who hath no more than time and will may sit in warm libraries by day or night and drink wisdom like wine, as if he sat on Tyberbanks with Horace and a jug of Falernian. I do say with all my heart that these stories are very good for children; and I must confess that still I find them treasurable and can sit me down to an evening of fairy-lore or to a fine concert of myths with right good will. But if I believed them and took them for transcripts of Nature's doings, then were I no more than a baby-mind in a man's body. So is it with the people when once they have grown to adult estate in civility. If then they turn with tender intelligence to their ancient religious myths and legends, it is well with them; they are then as a man handling, not without tear in eye, mayhap, his own infant garments and admiring the loving handiwork of his mother in them, like to Nature in the sacred stories where-with she hath embroidered and jeweled the first

robes of religion. But if still the people take the myths in literal and crass manner, thinking they happened just so in very fact and are historical transactions and Nature hath a magical storehouse and this is the manner of the appearance and dwelling of God in creation, then great evil and loss ensue; for the true beauty and exalting glory of Nature and of history are hidden altogether. So great is the wrong done to the eye of the spirit and so sad the bandaged blindness of it that I know not whether John Weiss were not right when he protested that of all the ills in the world at this date of time, the worst perchance and that which broods like a sinister bird over the most populous nest of flying miseries, is supernaturalism in religion.

Belike I have given more space than seems fair measure to this matter, because it is so hard, nay, impossible, to utter fitly in brief, according to the measure of my little book, the true glory of Nature and the manner of view of it which is exalting. Therefore I have thought that possibly by bringing the reader to the necromantic or miraculous manner of thinking of religion, I might effect best that he should turn away therefrom and obtain the sublime beauty of Order for himself, as a man shut for a little space in a dim light and then released might take note of the illumined earth in a new and joyful manner. But now I will speak of the grandeur with which the true view of Faith, if I have reasoned well, presents Nature to us,

albeit I must speak in but few and ill-sufficing words. That this view of Faith glorifies Nature appears thus: Faith is trust in the Universe as Moral Order; but Order, Law, The One in the Many, thoughts which are a tri-unity in the mind, reveal Nature as one infinite, transporting, majestic *Harmony*, which hath been called "The Music of the Spheres;" and no less is it the composition in agreeing melodies of all forms and motions and things on any sphere of them all, like this earth; one eternal Manifestation—*The One in the Many*—after one Manner—*Law*—in a glorious Beauty and Symmetry—*Order*. Miracles, speak of them how you will, present Nature as somewhat which must be entered from the outside by an Artificer thereof to be amended betimes, or specially supported in an exigency; and if the miracles be extended far, as in all religions they are, then Nature seems a play-ground or else a spectacle-camp or else a wrestling-field for caprice of Will or of different wills. But when The One in the Many hath appeared to us, the majesty and beauty of the Divine image thereof seizeth all our adoration. Then fly away all devices, "schemes of salvation," "signs," every manner of miraculous irruption whether supernal or infernal, all exigencies, corrections or amendments or supplements—they fly away "and there is no place found for them." Then is left Nature unto our vision, everlasting peace which man "made not nor can mar," glory, beauty, truth, might, wherein "is no variableness

neither shadow of turning," a solemn temple, infinite, still, holy, inviolable. Faith, carrying with her a great reverence, entereth the temple, with bared feet; yet Faith also is *at home* therein and frequenteth it with a bright gladness.

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## CHAPTER XII.

### **That this View of Faith Glorifies the Thought of God.**

TRUE Faith glorifies and exalts within us the thought of God by reason of the notion of Unity, which is the same as Order and Law. This appears, even with a sublimity, yet also with an exceeding sweet and precious familiarity to us, in the other expression of Unity, namely, The One in the Many. The very words thrill and arouse the soul, so plainly do they speak of the Eternal in things temporal, of the Infinite in the little, of the Perfect in things improving, of Love in all things. Not only sublime but very dear unto us, not only all-wonderful but very near to us, of our own household and exceeding close and lovely, seems all Nature and this earth unto us and around us by The One in the Many; nay more, even within *us*; for we are of the Many and therefore of the One, and not parted nor possibly to be parted, but the One is within our being; which thought is in the words of the great Apostle wherein he speaks of God, saying, namely, that God is "above all and through all and in all."



And these words are the same as the three terms which unite in Faith: "Above all"—this is Order; "through all"—this is Law; "in all"—this is The One in the Many.

The opposite of Order is either chance or miracle. But if there be chance, God is not; and if there be miracle, then in the intervals of miracle God is just so much the farther away as it is often that he must come to do special works and trim up his realm. If very often he must come, then it is because he inhabits not the earth nor dwells with us nor in us, but is far away in the intervals. If, however, he but seldom come with miracles but still needeth to come sometimes, then it is because, however he be with us, he is here only imperfectly, not in Almighty and Eternal Perfectness, nor visibly dwelling with us and in us, and all things in him. Now in either one of these two ways all historical religions conceive miracles, as they must, either frequent or rare; and often, as in the Christian Church it has happened, they conceive of them in both ways, saying that the grand and majestic miracles were done at a great time, an epoch, when the religion was taught and given down from God, but also that for many ages other smaller miracles and signs continued, and sometimes these were specially magnified for a season. But whether frequent or rare, each manner of conceiving the miracles has its own way, as I have said, of putting God afar off from the Perfectness of his Indwelling. But with the

thought of Order how near God cometh and stayeth! Nay *near* is not a word that can utter it, since verily he is in us and we in him, and he is in all things together and all things are brought to one intent in him. For it is the very meaning of Order that all things, and every least thing, are unambiguous with The One in the Many, and must seem so in measure as we understand better, and that all things together as one thought make the one unutterable wonder and glory which admitteth not anything as more divine or mysterious than any other thing, because all are of God and in God. "The Soul," saith a-Kempis, "to whom all things are One, who bringeth all things to One, who seeth all things in One, is able to remain steadfast in spirit and at rest in God."

It is very plain, I am sure, that if we conceive no Order and Law, Nature hath no God coming to sight. Far then from us and from truth were the glorious Zoroastrian saying, "Him whom I wish to exalt with my praise I now see with my eye and hear with my ear, knowing him to be God." For if miracles be necessary, it must be because Nature is imagined something outside of the being of God and alien from Divinity; which therefore, being apart and alien, surely goes wrong and falls down in some manner unless the Divinity of God visit it specially to set it right again. And from this alien or outside existence of Nature (though this it would seem were sad and bad enough and truly to be "without God in the

world") the path is very short and straight to a hostility in Nature, an antagonism unto God, a perpetual fierce war against him by the evil being of Nature. This path has been followed to that end of it many times; as in ancient northern and southern mythologies, in both alike, whereof one great part was the stories of giants, Titans, monstrous Nature-powers, warring with the higher Gods in battles; and the Norse myths, as if by a dim conception in the human heart that what could be battled in that manner could not be supreme Divinity, fabled that the true Divinity yet was awaited, and that, the good deities being at last conquered by the Monstrous Nature-powers, there should be hurled forth a ruin of all things from which should arise Divinity superior to the old good deities, and creation then should spring forth again into untroubled beauty and excellence. The like thought of antagonism has lain always in sundry forms in the Christian creeds, early and late, to be traced in one form of it, I mean Satan, if the learned be right, at least as far away as the Persian Dualism; and the conception was very strong in early Christian heresies, such as those of Mani and of Basilides. Now, because of this antagonism it was conceived that God must evince his control by miraculous interposition, to preserve and correct Nature and to show to believers that really he did live. But truly this is but a sad far foreignness of God, from which the thoughts of Order, Law, Unity, if truly we have them, reason

them, understand them, draw him; that it be known that he is with us, "dwelling in us," and that from the beginning all things "live, move and have their being in him."

As in Nature, so is it in human history. Miracles put God afar from the whole by so much as they bring him into part of it, and they make God foreign to all men by so much as they show him a visitor to some men. Wherefore by the miraculous view of religion, which is contrary to true Faith, because this Faith hath part and league with Order, Law and Unity—by the miraculous opinion, I say, the Infinite Circumference and Circumscription of Providence is dwindled to dots of special interpositions here and there; so that the realm of Presence and Love is broken, and by as much as Divine favors have fallen to these few, all other men are in a void. Nay, if the Presence and "signs" of God fall to one place above another in the least degree, then to the eye and the ear and the heart of reason all else is in a void. But of this I will say no more, and especially, on the other hand, of the Presence and Indwelling of God, the Infinite Eternal Indwelling, which cometh into the spirit in a flood of light, joy, trust, glorious adoration, by reason of the thoughts of Order, Law and The One in the Many; for this I am sure the reader now reasons easily for himself.

In conclusion of this thought, the sum of the whole is that Order, or Law, which is The One in the Many, fills all things with Divinity; but mir-

acles, "wonders and signs," which if they crowd in leave Order and Unity no standing room, fill only some things. Therefore by Order and Unity God is glorified in thought, also brought to be an Intimate Power and Comfort, being raised in thought from a visitor of some time, place, person, unto equal Eternal Presence with all. It can not be but that the thought of The One in the Many will turn the mind to think conversely of The Many in the One, that truly they all are in the One, and no one more than another, being all perfectly contained, and no one outside more than another, because there is no void—as saith the Psalmist, neither in heaven nor in the grave nor in the earth unto the uttermost parts of the sea. They who have this thought in Faith, always will say to one another, like a-Kempis, "Give thanks to the Supreme Goodness, who dealeth with thee so graciously, visiteth thee so lovingly, stirreth thee up so fervently, rouseth thee so powerfully, lest thou sink down with thine own weight and earthly things."

This brings me back to the word which I have used before, namely, *Indwelling*, "The Indwelling God proclaimed of old," saith Samuel Longfellow in a hymn. Verily "proclaimed of old," for so spake all the prophets. From Zarathustra to this hour never any man became a prophet by running about after miracles and "signs," after oracles, writings, scriptures, dispensations, places and events, wherein to learn of God, but by taking

counsel of his own soul, "where are the sources of astonishment and power." "The soul's own sense of God," saith Hosmer in a hymn; and in another hymn, Gannett, "Journey inward to thyself;" and in like manner a-Kempis, "Where art thou when thou art not present to thyself, but hast run after all things?"

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### **That this View of Faith is Strength, Peace, Joy.**

I SPEAK NOW of the individual heart. In measure as we have not the thoughts of Order, Law, and The One in the Many, and in measure as we reason not earnestly of them, and drink not of their spiritual abundance, not only seem Nature and human history unpresenced of God, but every person seemeth orphaned. Divinity then is cast out of this time and only read of as in the past. It hath been the peculiar boast of the miraculous and arbitrary view of religion, the creed, namely, that God breaketh in at times and seasons according to his good will and pleasure to work special ends—of this opinion, I say, it hath been the boast that thereby each person may be conceived specially cared for and the Divine Love and Guidance are made very plain. But contrariwise, say those who think in this manner, Law takes heed only of the mass, the whole, merges each person out of sight in the race; Law consigns, say they,

the longing, striving, weary spirit to a very cold comfort in pitiless rigid method. Wherefore the miracle-view of the world seems to many minds the more religious. But I fear not to conclude that this comfort and stay which is the very boast of the miracle-view is exactly what it can not bring to pass, nay, what it destroys or hinders. Consider of it thus: Plainly what is needed for strength, peace, joy, is to think of God and know of him as now present in this time, and never anywhere more present than now with us. But, contrariwise, it needs but to read a little in the history of religion to learn that in measure as Nature hath been conceived of as arbitrary and miraculous, men always have looked back into the past for the full presence of God, or for means of assurance that ever he is present at all; and it needs but little philosophy to know that this must be so. For always it will be impossible for men to believe in Divine interposition for them at the moment. There is too much toil and sorrow in life, disappointment, privation, pain, unfilled longings, too many shadows that lift not, or lift but slowly at the long tender pull of Time. The lessons are too many and too plain that man *must* toil, and that his comforts must be builded with his own hand-labor. Whence it comes to pass, in the miracle-view of Nature and religion, that since oracles and "signs" in this view are men's only manner of conceiving of fulness and perfectness of Divine Presence and Life, and since the hard

lessons of facts and men's unintended reflections thereon forbid hope of such oracles or "signs" at present, men always have looked, and by reason must look, afar back for the God whom they know not of here present, and yet must find or perish. Afar back they look into the hoar ages, where distance hath veiled distinct images and left only a mysterious space wherein devout imagination seemeth to look straight through "wonders and signs" upon the very being of God. Hence spring, as in another place I have said, the moving myths of the past, wherein God talks in gardens, rains food from the sky, divides the waters, hurls down cities and catches up his servants in chariots of fire.

Now when the thoughts of Order, Law, The One in the Many, have builded their seat and cathedral in the mind, lo! then the past appeareth religious only because once it was the present; and the present moment hath evermore a sanctity, being the manifest of the ONE who was and shall be because ever he is. Where then are "labor and sorrow?" Lo! at hand the same; but not the same to confuse us. To think of God in the present time is to engulf pain and pleasure *equally* in the Infinite Order, in the Perfectness which is Law, in the sacredness of things which is The One in the Many. All things come to us out of that holy silence, which is the reigning of The One in the Many. To the outward we leave the outward, being in a seat of the spirit whence we look



on the outward to know of it, but never to be captive to it nor overwhelmed in it. It hath its glory of inviolableness, wherein is its impress of the image of God. Living with reverence in this Divine Order, which "hath no variableness neither shadow of turning," we say the poet speaks well when he asks,

"When the loose mountain trembles from on high,  
Shall gravitation stop if we go by?"—

and we would not that it should stop, though we be caught under crumbling hills.

This is a coming into ourselves, to know of ourselves, what truly we are. Law hath a severity which is no respecter of persons, and tosses our bodies and our works out of its mighty course if we have done contrary to it, or if others have and we be involved with them. But we question then the more of our very selves, to know the more deeply that we have life not sounded by these things, that we are spiritual and moral being, resident will; and we behold with our very eyes, as if we opened door into the "Holy of Holies," and know verily, that in the inmost of our being, where our will hath its mystery of action and is the center of a little kosmos like to the great, God inhabits, with "no variableness neither shadow of turning." This is very vast strength, peace, joy, invincible, which Faith bringeth to us from thoughts of God by the power of the thoughts of Order, Law, The One in the Many. And no wonder it is so and

that the might thereof is very great; for he who hath these thoughts "thinketh God's thoughts after Him."

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#### CHAPTER XIV.

**That this View of Faith deepens Devotion and Worship.**

ON this head I need spend only few words. And yet it were a theme for many, even for psalms and hymns and scriptures and every eloquence, if I could have the space and then master the eloquence to fill the space withal. This were for joy and exaltation. But for reasoning in this place very little will suffice.

Blanco White, near the end of his life—a life of continued clearance of mind, unto true Faith at last, not obtained without much discipline and pain, wherefrom he hath both right and weight to speak,—said, "Whenever the ideas of wisdom, order, love, blend together into an imageless conception, and that conception draws the soul into the Infinite in an act of longing love after the Eternal Source of our being, how pure, how tranquil, how confident is the adoration which the soul performs. \* \* \* The mind turns back to the business and the pains of life full of filial confidence, without a thought about acts of propitiation, about practical measures of safety against the wrath of God." This shows, out of the experience of a good man, what is the manner of worship that

true Faith openeth in us, that it is a lifting up of soul unto what moveth our devoutness, and very far from a prostration of ourselves, heads in dust, or a propitiation, whereby to gain favors or escape ills, to leap into heaven or dodge aside from hell. But propitiation and supplication come of fear, which abounds whenever religion hangs on oracles and "signs;" devout and pure worship springs of true Faith which cometh with seeing Order and The One in the Many. "Fear is an elder motive to religion than gratitude"\* and arouses supplicancy and placation before there hath been time for Faith to be born of thought and nursed of knowledge. The savage bows himself before an image or the stars or some conceived shape, whatsoever he deifies, that he may entreat for somewhat. He worships not, but begs; or if he praise, it is that his deity may be the more good-humored and disposed to his desires. This manner of religion is very common in the historical cults, and is notorious; I can recall no exception; certainly it is the rule with them. Greek, Druid, Icelandic, Jew, all use sacrifices, vegetable, animal, and even human, by which to buy of God, or win his good-humor unto, a special dispensing of favors or exemptions; and I can not blind myself from seeing a like thing in Christianity, in the propitiating sacrifice of Christ as Paul seems to con-

\* In this statement and what follows, I would not be understood to say that fear *alone* will explain religion at any time or in any human condition or any race. We are far from having the data for such an assertion. See good remarks on this point in "How Religion Arises," by Duren J. H. Ward, § 4 and § 5, pp. 17 *seq.*

ceive it, and in the expiatory sacrifice and atonement affirmed in Christian Creeds, to the present hour.

This, to my mind, as I must say freely, though respectfully toward other men as to what they include in religion, is in very truth and reason so *unreligious*, so far from a pure devoutness and worship, that I wonder not at the exclamations of Plutarch in his excellent discourse of Superstition, wherein he considers this manner of religion less reverential than none. "What!" saith he, "is he that holds there is no God guilty of impiety, and is not he that describes God as the superstitious do much more guilty? \* \* \* The atheist believes there is no God; the superstitious would have none, but is a believer against his will, and would be an infidel if he durst. He would be as glad to ease himself of the burden of his fear, as Tantalus would be to slip his head from under the great stone that hangs over him, and would bless the condition of the atheist as absolute freedom compared with his own. The atheist now has nothing to do with superstition; while the superstitious is an atheist in his heart, but is too much afraid and fearful of heart to think as he is inclined." Thus Plutarch; and though I would not go with him quite to that end, that no religion is more reverent in the soul than a slavish one, nay, I would not do away with a barbarous worship unless I could put a better in the room of it, yet I feel some reason in Plutarch, and especially reason

that applies to us who have grown into much knowledge; and Plutarch speaks as I have quoted, not because he sets small value on thoughts of God, if they be good, for in the same discourse he says, "Atheism is a very lamentable and sad ignorance. For to be blind or see amiss in matters of this consequence can not but be a fatal unhappiness to the mind, it being thus deprived of the fairest and brightest of its many eyes, the knowledge of God."

All forms of approach and prayer unto God under incitement and guidance of "wonders and signs" have this in common, that they are selfish. They appear to be a seeking after God, but the seeking is no more than a means or instrument to compass some desires or to get the better of an enemy. This, then, which is the purpose of the prayer, is the *real* inquiry, object, motive, and seeking in the mind. But all prostration, mendicancy, self-seeking before God, vanish from the soul when Order and Law are conceived. Faith raiseth the soul to heaven in pure worship with the winged thought of The One in the Many. For then not only we know it is impossible to buy or persuade any breaking in upon the hallowed Order, but the thought is very abhorrent. We would not wish it. Before the Infinite Order we bow in such silence as itself moveth in. In the habitation of this holy stillness, of immovable Order, of inevitable Law, of the Eternal Voice that speaketh to us on every side out of the

Many, no selfish imploration can dwell, no bartering, business, restlessness, ambitions, devices, rages, no covetings, no fears. The soul poureth forth in a confiding and sublime adoration, exalted in an act of speechless pure worship unto the Holy One in the Many, whose Being in us and in all things is our unity with the conformation, end, and moral order of the Universe.

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## CHAPTER XV.

**That this View of Faith is a Revealer of God.**

WE have come nearly to the end together, kindly reader, so that I have only this one more thought to bring forward; and to that I may believe you have come already in your own mind. If our course to this point have been reasoned well, we have beheld very plainly that the true view of Faith doth purify and infinitely exalt our thoughts of God. It is now to be said that this Faith also revealeth God and openeth two of the many eyes of the mind to behold him. One eye that thus is opened is reason; which appears thus: Return for a moment to the definition of Order, namely, that it is Form *plus* Meaning, or, in the dynamical, Action *plus* Purpose. In this conception and in the words of it is locked the positing of two intelligences, one contemplating the Order and able to perceive Meaning and Purpose, the other the Being of the Order, of the Meaning therein, and

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of man, the contemplating being who is in the Order and of it, and yet by the mystery of his intelligence looketh out on it and judgeth of it. This is a thought which can be named only with The Great Name.

But again: What is the opposite of Action *plus* Purpose? Plainly Action without Purpose, which is Chance, But what again is the opposite of Chance? Plainly Will, which is to say, Reason, Preference, Intention! Here again is the thought which hath no way to be called but by The Great Name.

But again: Can the One in The Many have any meaning short of this, that whatever is ideal in the Many hath itself in the One? But intellection and determination and virtue are ideal in the Many, and all things tend and move unto these excellencies. Therefore these belong to The One in the Many. Inversely, but with the same meaning, Marcus Aurelius saith, "Reverence that which is best in the Universe; and this is that which makes use of all things and directs all things. And in like manner also reverence that which is best in thyself; and *this is of the same kind as that.*" Here again is the thought which hath no opening into expression but by The Great Name.

The other eye of the mind that true Faith opens to behold God, is emotion, awe, exaltation. For to this appeals whatever is grand, sublime, glorious. Therefore a very great, exalted, adorable

conception of God is more easy to be received than a meager and low thought of him, turneth the mind unto a strong believing and moveth it to be assured that God is; as I have heard that Bossuet was moved, listening to Vincent de Paul, and exclaimed, "He speaks of God in a way so wise and grand that God himself seems to speak through his mouth;" and as I myself once heard a good man say, who strangely liked to call himself atheist, "I listened to a wise sage last night, and he spoke of God so nobly that I trembled for my atheism." Now the conceptions of Order, Law, Unity, do lift up the mind in company with the thought of God to an unbounded sublimity and infinite height, as I have said before (Chapter XII.); wherefore true Faith, which never ceaseth to speak of Order, Law and The One in the Many, directly revealeth and bringeth God unto belief, because the high, holy, worshipful, adorable thought and spiritual meditation of God, to which the knowledge of The One in the Many bringeth us, disposeth the heart to believe, nay, openeth it to know and to behold, by the vastness and the exaltation and the divine beauty of this thought of God. For what is worthy of God seizeth on the soul to enforce it, or lovingly to draw it, to God. Insomuch that Marcus Aurelius, out of the abundance of his piety and reflection concerning the unity of all things and the harmony and constancy of the Universe, which reflection was the presence in him of true Faith, uttered his belief of God in



terms even of his bodily eyes, like the Zoroastrian saying which already I have quoted; and these seers, I think, spoke wisely and well. Saith Aurelius, "To them who ask, Where hast thou seen Divinity or how comprehendest thou that God exists and so thou worshipest, I answer, God may be seen even with the eyes."

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## CHAPTER XVI.

### **Conclusion.**

IF the reader have accompanied me patiently to this point, it must be either with accordance or with dissent, or with doubts, which are suspensions of agreement or of disagreement and will come to one or the other finally. If it be with doubt or with dissent, then either the matter is new to the reader or he has considered it before. In the latter case I have no advantage beyond any man nor any more warranty of being right, and can do no more than say farewell with the kind fellowship of reason. But if the reader who accepts not the matter find it new to him, I will ask him to consider how brief this book is for such themes, and to return to sundry parts of it to expand them and follow them out for himself by thought and by historical reading. Of the reader who has come along with me in agreement and belief, as well as journeyed through the pages, I will ask to take friendly leave with a word of survey of our journey

and what we have come unto, as if we had climbed a height and from that vantage could see in one view all the path of ascent.

What hath been our progress and unto what station have we come? This, I may think: That we have found Faith to be Trust in the Universe as Moral Order; that this is very grand, glorious, sufficing Faith, and hath an exceeding effect on all our thinking, both of ourselves and of Nature and of human history, and on our sensibility in religion and our manner of thinking of God; that especially in our thoughts of our own souls as being truthful in power to know of God, and in our thoughts of God, and of him in Nature and dwelling in us, this Faith hath an exceeding great and exalting and glorifying office unto us; that by it all things put on a face of new unutterable beauty and glory; that God is The One in the Many, the Life of life, the Being of the Order which containeth our bodies and fortunes under dominion of observable Law; yet that in our very observation thereof he cometh unto every one of us and dwelleth in us unto a sure and joyful sense in us of Eternal Presence; that the storied pomp of men and the golden glories of Nature, the past, present, future, the everlasting Now, lie in the hollow of the Hand of the One Presence, Perfectness, Eternity, Almightyness, "who taketh up the isles as a very little thing," yet with exceeding perfectness of Order and Law no less "providently caters for the sparrow," guideth the dew-

drop to a woody cell, and satisfieth the mown field with rain. And when Faith hath come with us to these thoughts, then follows a pure worship, exalting adoration, prayer without beggary.

Marcus Aurelius saith, in words which gather all parts of this little book in one, "Everything harmonizes with me which is harmonious to thee, O Universe. Nothing for me is too early or too late which is in due time for thee. Everything is fruit to me which the seasons bring, O Nature; from thee are all things, in thee are all things, to thee all return. The poet saith of Athens, Dear city of Cecrops; and wilt not thou say of Nature, Dear city of God?"















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